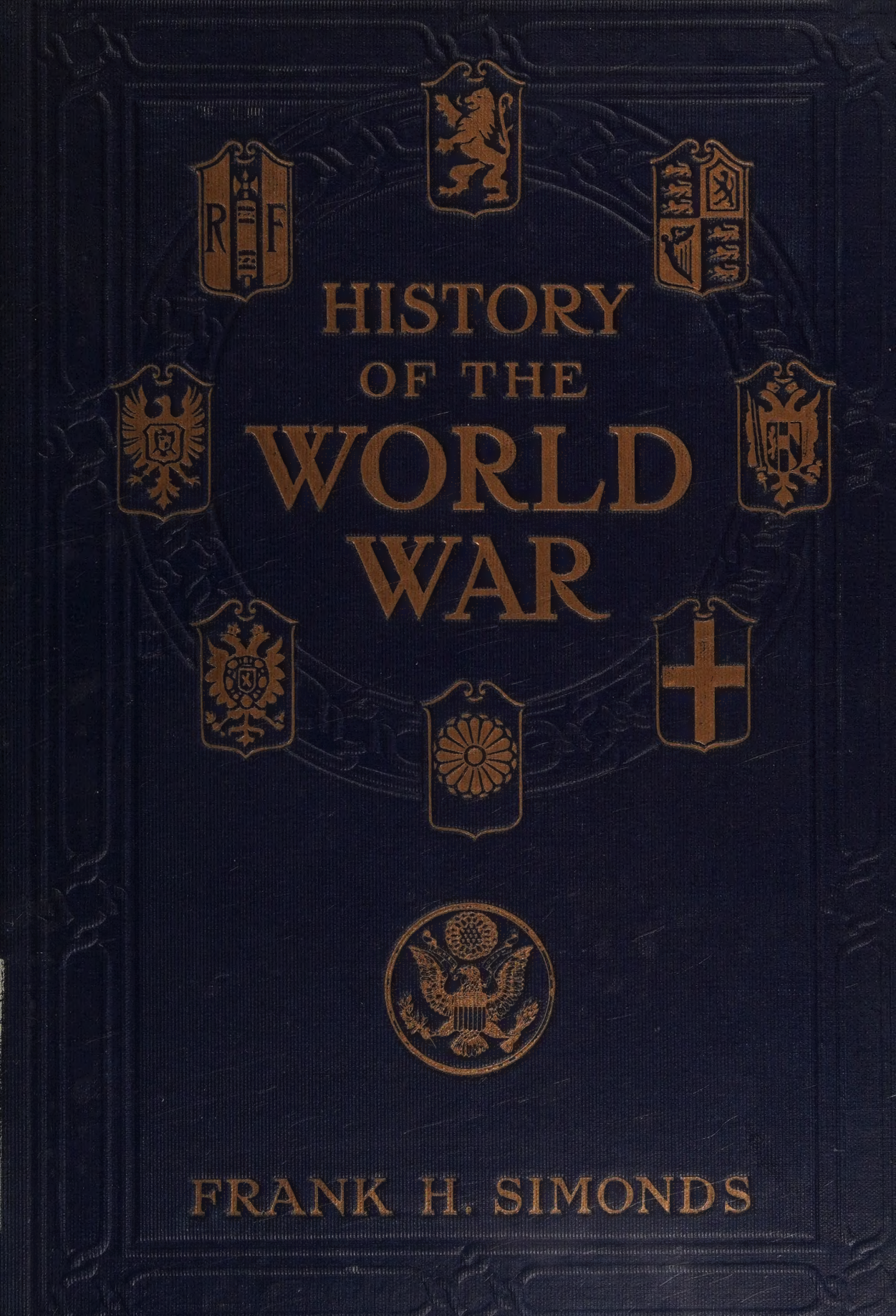


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FRANK H. SIMONDS



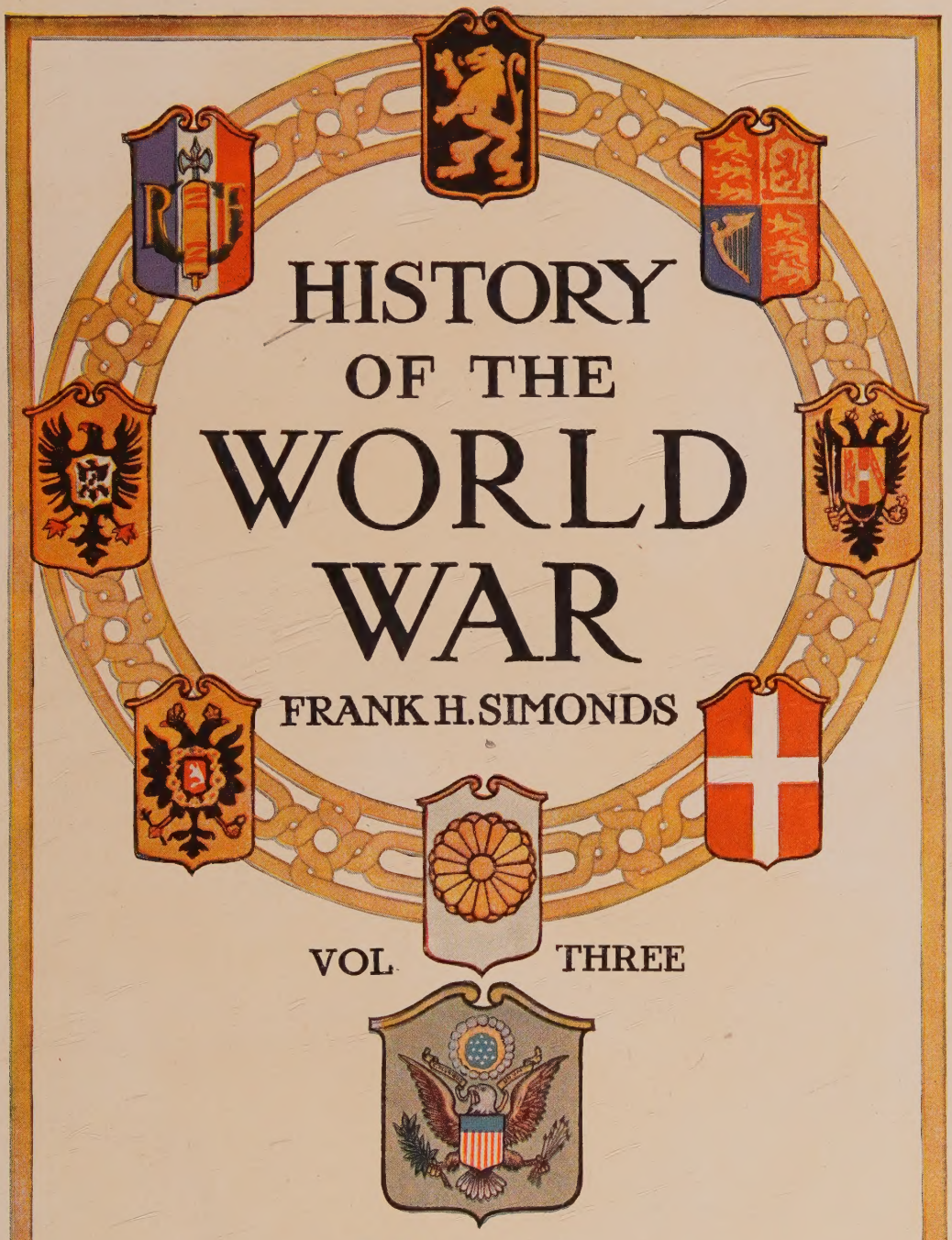


HISTORY OF THE WORLD WAR



"VERDUN"

From the painting by Rosset-Granger



HISTORY OF THE WORLD WAR

FRANK H. SIMONDS

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HISTORY OF THE WORLD WAR

CHAPTER ONE

THE NEW PERIOD

I

THE TWO CONTESTS

The third period of the World War, that which is included within the twelve months of 1916, presents a clearer and less complicated picture than the two preceding periods. In it the expectations of a sudden decision, following a tremendous success continue to weaken—have in fact well nigh vanished by the end of the campaign. Even the Germans, who in their attack upon Verdun at least dreamed of a new Sedan, have laid it aside by the coming of winter and are seeking to reinforce military weapons by a peace offensive, while the experience of the Allies—on the defensive at Verdun, on the offensive at the Somme—has dissipated the notions common in all the earlier months of the struggle.

In this period which we are now to examine, the real interest and importance of two contests dwarf all else. Verdun and the Somme are conflicts which in turn held the stage of the world as no two military dramas had fixed the concentrated attention of a world audience since the last phases of the Napoleonic cycle. Unlike the great campaigns of the previous year in the east, they were fought on ground that had, in a measure, been familiar at all times to millions in Allied and neutral nations alike, and in the months of the World War had been studied and re-studied until Arras and Rheims, Amiens and Verdun, were definite circumstances in the minds of the people of all classes in all countries.

The result was unmistakable. While the German armies advanced through Poland and Serbia, while Mitteleuropa was constructed by campaigns along the Vistula, the Dniester and the Danube, the world audience still fixed its attention upon the trenches of Flanders and Champagne. The meaning of the eastern movements escaped it, but

THE WESTERN BATTLEFIELDS IN 1916.



when Germany renewed her assault upon France, when she sought a decision at Verdun, and still later when the Allies in their turn took the offensive along the Somme, the world understood at once the issues of the contests and hung breathlessly on the details of the operations.

And these circumstances gave to the struggles which centred about Verdun and the Somme a hold upon popular imagination which, if not in excess of their real value, was at least disproportionate to their comparative importance, measured beside the later events on the eastern front. The defeat of the Germans at Verdun was one of the great achievements of the war, it was the preservation of that decision of the Marne, which for four years saved western civilization from the immediate threat of German domination. The Somme was the first expression

of the true military power of an organized Britain, but the Somme and Verdun blinded the Allied nations to what was happening in the east and this blindness led to still another bitter awakening, when Russia collapsed and Rumania fell.

The campaign of 1916 is interesting as one more attempt of the two contending forces to break the western deadlock and abolish the war of positions preparatory to crushing the enemy in a new campaign of movement. When it opened, Germany, victorious in the east, her Mitteleuropa all but completed, sought a decision in the west, which should guarantee her position in the east. By midsummer, with the German success at Verdun still postponed, the Allies took the offensive and by concentric attacks at the Somme, before Gorizia, in Galicia, and finally in Transylvania and in Macedonia, endeavoured to overwhelm the Central Powers by equal pressure on all fronts.

But if subsequently German failure at Verdun was complete, incidental Allied successes—at Gorizia, in Galicia, in Macedonia—were rendered of no value, when Russia betrayed Rumania and German, Bulgarian, and Turkish troops occupied Bucharest and Constanza, and completed the clearing of the roadway from Berlin to Constantinople. Hopes of a decision in the campaign of 1917 were thus plainly destroyed, as the defection of Russia became assured, while the German, despite his successes in the east, weighed against these brilliant achievements the terrible death lists of Verdun and the Somme and contemplated an inevitable retreat in the west, made necessary by the British advance over the Albert ridge.

Thus, after a campaign in which first German and then Allied hopes reached a high level, both coalitions were compelled to confess failure in the pursuit of an immediate decision and concede the growing likelihood that complete military decision would be attained, if at all, in years, rather than in months. The logical consequence of this was the German peace offensive of the closing weeks of 1916, which, in a measure, transformed the character of the struggle and introduced a new element, never again to be totally absent, and destined in the following year to increase in importance with each additional month of warfare.

II. THE CAMPAIGN OF 1916

The campaign of 1916 is thus a turning point in the history of the war. In it both coalitions by arms alone, seek a decisive triumph. Thereafter each contending party, while carrying on the military campaign with varying energy, throws more and more attention to diplomacy, to intrigue, and propaganda, and to the effort to capitalize the war weariness in the opposing nations and to break the morale of the enemy by peace proposals, necessarily vague, since on neither side is there yet any real willingness to compromise on the vital questions, but designed to fasten upon the enemy the responsibility for the prolongation of a war, become almost intolerable to both sides.

In the period now under examination, Russia makes her last fight. The victories of Brusiloff in Volhynia and along the Dniester are, in fact, the expiring flicker of that Romanoff régime which, from Peter the Great to the latest Alexander, had carried Russian armies and Slav frontiers onward into Central Europe and Turkish Asia. While the world still marvelled at Russian recovery and the victories before Lemberg seemed again to threaten the very existence of the Hapsburg throne, the court and the Czar were passing under the fatal spell of German influence and the Russian people were moving imperceptibly but rapidly toward the Revolution which was to change all.

To the close of the campaign of 1916 the war is fought along lines which had been laid down in the Nineteenth Century. Whatever variations were introduced, the general scheme was that which had been foreseen by the statesmen, if not by the soldiers, of previous decades. The war, despite the moral issues involved in German actions and German methods, despite the ever-growing evidence that democracy and autocracy were struggling in opposite camps, was a war such as had in some fashion been sketched in all the military writings of the years which followed the creation of the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance.

When one passes from 1916 to 1917 there is almost a sense of crossing a frontier as clearly defined as that which separates the period of the French Revolution from that of the decades before 1789. For the

war that was fought between August, 1914, and December, 1916, Europe had been prepared, and despite the defection of Russia in the second half of the latter year, the struggle was, on the whole, just such a conflict as Europe had feared and foretold for nearly a generation before it came. But with the end of the campaign of 1916 both contestants have to confess a measure of defeat. Neither's strategy has brought a decision, neither group of powers, looking to the immediate future, can convincingly lay claim to a prospective decision.

The consequence of this failure in both camps is the beginning of domestic protest and disorder on either side of the firing lines. Implicit confidence, unquestioning patriotism, ungrudging sacrifice, these begin to disappear. Each government finds itself daily on trial before a public which is both suspicious and unfriendly, and each leader is compelled to defend himself, not merely against charges of incompetence in conducting military operations and diplomatic enterprises, but against the more dangerous allegation that he is actually prolonging the war by a refusal to recognize facts as they are and to accept conditions which he cannot modify.

In a certain measure it is correct to say that the campaign of 1916 marks the end of the period in which unity at home expresses the will to win of each of the peoples at war. The symptoms out of which the Revolution developed in the Slav Empire are discoverable to a degree in all nations, and war weariness grows apace in Britain as in France, in Germany as in Austria, until all governments find themselves upon the defensive before their own peoples and all statesmen are condemned to make pacific gestures across the firing lines and utter proposals of peace which, however impracticable, give a semblance of readiness to end a struggle becoming intolerable for the millions.

And it was the failure of the campaign of 1916, the failure of the Allied campaign, quite as much as the failure of the German, which led to the profound modifications of spirit and purpose in the nations at war in the following year. By January 1, 1917, the rulers and leaders of both coalitions could expect only cynical distrust when they forecast a complete decision in the new year on grounds far less impressive than

the foundations out of which they had based sweeping prophecies in the preceding periods.

III. OLD AND THE NEW

In the campaign of 1916 those German rulers who promised their subjects to destroy France briefly and completely, not only failed, but paid a price for the failure beyond all previous military calculation. Not only did the attack upon Verdun fail, but the Allied offensive at the Somme slowly but surely wore its way through the strongest German defences, and Allied artillery exacted a toll which brought mourning to all Germany. But, conversely, the Allies, whose offensive was rashly heralded with promises of a break-through and a liberation of France and Belgium, gained little more than six miles of shell-torn soil, on a restricted front, while the collapse of Rumania was a final curtain to all the hopes, dreams, and calculations of the Allies in the Balkans.

The Mitteleuropa which Germany had created in 1915 endured the tests of 1916 and on the Rumanian side was expanded to insure not one but three roads from the Central Powers to their Turkish ally. The delusion that France could be forced to make a separate peace by one more campaign in the west cost the Germans more men than Napoleon sacrificed to reach Moscow. But the Allied belief that the German lines in the west could be broken, was shaken in the long struggle from Albert to the outskirts of Bapaume, and though the subsequent German retreat from the Noyon salient, in March, 1917, established the right of the Allies to claim the Somme as a victory, faith in the Allied ability to break the German lines was once more demolished by the failures of France on the Aisne and Britain in Flanders in the following year.

In a sense, one may say that the Old Europe—the Europe of the period between the Franco-Prussian War and the Second Balkan War, the Europe of Bismarck, of Beaconsfield, the Europe of the Congress of Berlin and all the other convocations down to the Conference of London of 1912, the Europe founded upon the experience and history of the latter half of the Nineteenth Century—fought itself to the point of tem-

porary exhaustion in the first three campaigns of the war, its bankruptcy was a fact, already dimly perceived, when 1916 ended, and bound to be unmistakable before the new year had progressed far.

Issues, conditions, prospects, all submit to violent modifications before 1917 is far advanced. But for the survival of that horror and hatred of the German methods, disclosed in Belgium and France; but for the reassertion of these methods in the new submarine war, declared in January, 1917; above all, but for the intervention of the United States, no man can be sure that the war would not have worn itself out by midsummer and Europe have made another peace like that of Westphalia conceding to Germany profits such as France derived from the earlier settlements.

Always, therefore, in viewing the events of 1916, one must keep in mind the fact that an old world of ideas and of ambitions, of diplomacy and of statesmanship, is crumbling under an ordeal by fire, and giving way for the unknown, which is coming. Had the Allies won at the Somme, or the Germans at Verdun; had 1916 seen a decision of the war, or even, had it seen an old-fashioned settlement, after the German peace proposal, the ancient landmarks would probably have survived; the Europe which emerged from the storm would have been recognizable, in all respects, as the Europe of 1914, and of all times since the unification of Germany and Italy in the previous century.

Unmistakably 1916, owing to the events of this momentous year, represents a final effort of the old order and the old system to save itself, first, by successful military operations; second, by settlement around the green table in advance of the destruction of the existing European hierarchy, incident alike to popular discontent due to its continued failure to save mankind from the greatest of all known afflictions and to the outburst of that Bolshevik storm which was temporarily at least to transform conceptions and conditions in all the Allied countries. Straight through this year the reins of government remain fairly securely in the hands of statesmen well known when the World War opened, public opinion and popular emotion follow well-beaten pathways, but a few months later the Russian Revolution is the signal for a change

which fills the world with confusion and bewilders the contemporary observer as it may puzzle the later historian.

In 1916, as in the two preceding years, the military events claim almost exclusive attention. Verdun, the Somme, the Russian offensive in Galicia, the Italian success at Gorizia, the swift and infinitely sad tragedy of Rumania, these succeed each other with amazing rapidity and give to the military history of these twelve months a variety and a volume of operations and of battles which can hardly be paralleled even in the first brilliant years of the Wars of the French Revolution, while the Battle of Jutland, incomplete as it was, establishes a new standard of measurement in the conflict of modern navies.

IV. CONSEQUENCES OF THE CAMPAIGN

Viewed in retrospect, the campaigns and battles of this year were barren of affirmative result. They were destructive of the foundations of all governmental systems at home, rather than of the armies or will-power of the enemy nations. Verdun may easily survive as the most brilliant single episode in human history, regard being had for the magnitude of the struggle and the miracle of French resistance, yet the Verdun epic ended almost where it began, leaving both contestants almost equally exhausted and the victorious French, again, as at the Marne, unable to turn an undisputed triumph into an offensive which should liberate France much less win the war.

In 1914 the statesmen failed to prevent war. Diplomacy and statesmanship were both bankrupt as machinery to preserve international peace. In 1916 the failure of the soldier to win the war, the incapacity of the generals in their department, was as clearly indicated as had been the earlier ineptitude of the rulers and leaders in their own field, and the consequences were unmistakable before another twelve months had passed. While the masses still preserved a confidence in the ability of their rulers and representatives, or a faith in the skill and efficiency of their generals, the war followed familiar highways, but in 1916 popular distrust in both grew to the point where the failure of the regular instruments of national and international action could be employed as an

argument for the substitution of the orator of the soap-box for the chief minister of the Czar, or the commander of a platoon for the ever-victorious Brusiloff.

All this was hidden from the world of 1916. We lived from day to day upon the reports of the fighting on the Heights of the Meuse or of the thrust upward toward the crest of the Albert ridge. Allied depression in the opening days of Verdun, heightened by the British disaster at Kut-el-Amara, intensified by the earlier narratives of the Battle of Jutland, changed to a full cry of optimism in July and August, when, with Verdun saved, German defeat in France and Austrian disaster in Galicia and on the Isonzo seemed assured.

No one who lived through 1916 in an allied nation can forget the rapidly changing emotions, now of confidence, now of despair, until the final disaster—the destruction of betrayed Rumania—abolished all hopes of swift success and ushered in the German peace proposal, which first bewildered and then angered the Allied world, but even though rejected, profoundly altered all subsequent discussion and opinion. Henceforth, until the return of the German offensive in the west in March, 1918, brought the Allied nations again to the edge of ruin, despite the rejection of the German proposal, the world talked of peace, even when the necessity for more war and greater sacrifice was still perceived on all sides.

And with the close of the campaign of 1916, at least for a time, we cross the frontier between the clarity of Nineteenth Century ideas and conceptions and the confused—and, to the contemporary world, incomprehensible—doctrines and formulæ which the Russian Revolution evolved but the radical elements in many other nations in some degree echoed. Even that statement of democratic war aims and peace terms which satisfied the convictions and conscience of the Allied nations of 1916 was destined in a few months to assume a colour of reaction which would move the Russian Bolsheviki to couple the Kaiser and the President of the United States in the same indictment and American and German governmental systems in one contemptuous death sentence.

Finally, with the campaign of 1916, we come to the end of the period

in which the military events claim first attention or attract most interest. Henceforth, for many months, the soldiers fight and the statesmen talk with equal interest for the world audience, and the audience itself, with ever-growing frequency, takes up the word itself. Up to the very end of the year the battle lines of the Allies survive apparently unshaken, the nations united against Germany seem still bound to each other by enduring bonds and agreed on a common programme—but hardly had the new year come when the whole Allied situation was profoundly modified, first by the external consequences of the Russian Revolution and then by the repercussion of Russian revolutionary doctrines in all other Allied countries. Between August 1, 1914, and January 1, 1917, events move logically and with little departure from the anticipated course, but between January 1, 1917, and New Year, 1918, there is a gulf hardly to be measured.

In every sense, therefore, the Third Phase of the World War is one of commanding interest and, viewed in the contemporary light, one likely to have enduring meaning as marking the frontier between an old world and a new, between the Europe of the Marne and Verdun and the world of the Russian Revolution and of America's entrance into the conflict.

CHAPTER TWO

VERDUN—THE GERMAN ATTACK

I

THE GRAND STRATEGY

The opening of the new year saw the Germans in a military position not greatly different from that which they had occupied in the first days of the war and in certain respects, more satisfactory. In August, 1914, they had misjudged the Russians, both with respect to the rapidity of Russian mobilization and to Russian ability to destroy the Austrian armies. But now, thanks to the victories of the preceding campaign, there could be no immediate prospect of a Russian offensive, if, indeed, Russia were able again to make any attack. In 1914 Germany had, somewhat rashly, counted upon six weeks of immunity from eastern complications and she had calculated that in this time she could dispose of France. Now, for at least six months, she could hope for a free hand in the west.

As for the British, while the slender numbers which Field-Marshal French was able to concentrate in France for the first struggle had expanded to an army of at least half a million and was rapidly becoming a menace to the German western flank, in Flanders and Artois it was still lacking in guns and training to bring off a successful offensive, and the British failure at Loos was a reassuring circumstance for German High Command. Any British attack before midsummer would be bound to end badly, given the contemporary state of the British army, which was still in the early stages of reconstruction as a volunteer force, in large part officered by, and composed of, men newly withdrawn from civil life and necessarily lacking military training.

Once more, as in the days of the Marne campaign, the Germans had to deal with France, the one enemy inferior in numbers but equal in all else that made a nation strong in war. As in 1914, the German

problem was to dispose of France before Russia could become dangerous, but now the problem was to a degree complicated by the fact that Great Britain, as well as Russia, was bound, in a time which could be calculated, to become a real menace and that, once the first British armies were ready, a well-nigh inexhaustible reservoir of men and munitions would supply them for future campaigns.

Instead of six weeks, the Germans could reckon on well nigh six months in which to dispose of France, but failure to accomplish this would have even more serious consequences than the Marne defeat, for henceforth France was bound to be supported by British numbers, guns, and munitions, and any considerable German superiority in any field of military resources was unlikely ever to return save in the event of a Russian surrender not yet to be counted upon. But if France could be put out, then the British would be unable to be a menace to the Germans on the Continent for the duration of the war.

Germany had created her Mitteleuropa; she had undermined the military power of Russia; she had, in fact—although this was not yet plainly visible—dealt a death blow to the Russian Empire and insured the Revolution and collapse which were to follow. She had opened the road to the East and any peace, following that French defeat which was now to be sought, would confirm her mastery, not alone in the Balkans, not merely in Constantinople, but in Mesopotamia and in Palestine, on the road to India and at the gates of Egypt.

Under one more colossal blow the Germans might expect that France would collapse, or, even if she did not collapse, lose heart and abandon a struggle in which she had to stand alone, for neither of her greater allies could help her, and the cost to invaded France was bound to be tremendous. A great success, even though it were not a complete triumph—a success which should win more territory and at least one of the great fortresses of France—might lead the French to consent to a separate peace, provided that the terms were not made too onerous and that the German military achievement had been sufficiently shining.

All German comment, before it went to the discussion of the strategy of the next campaign, rested upon the declaration that this campaign

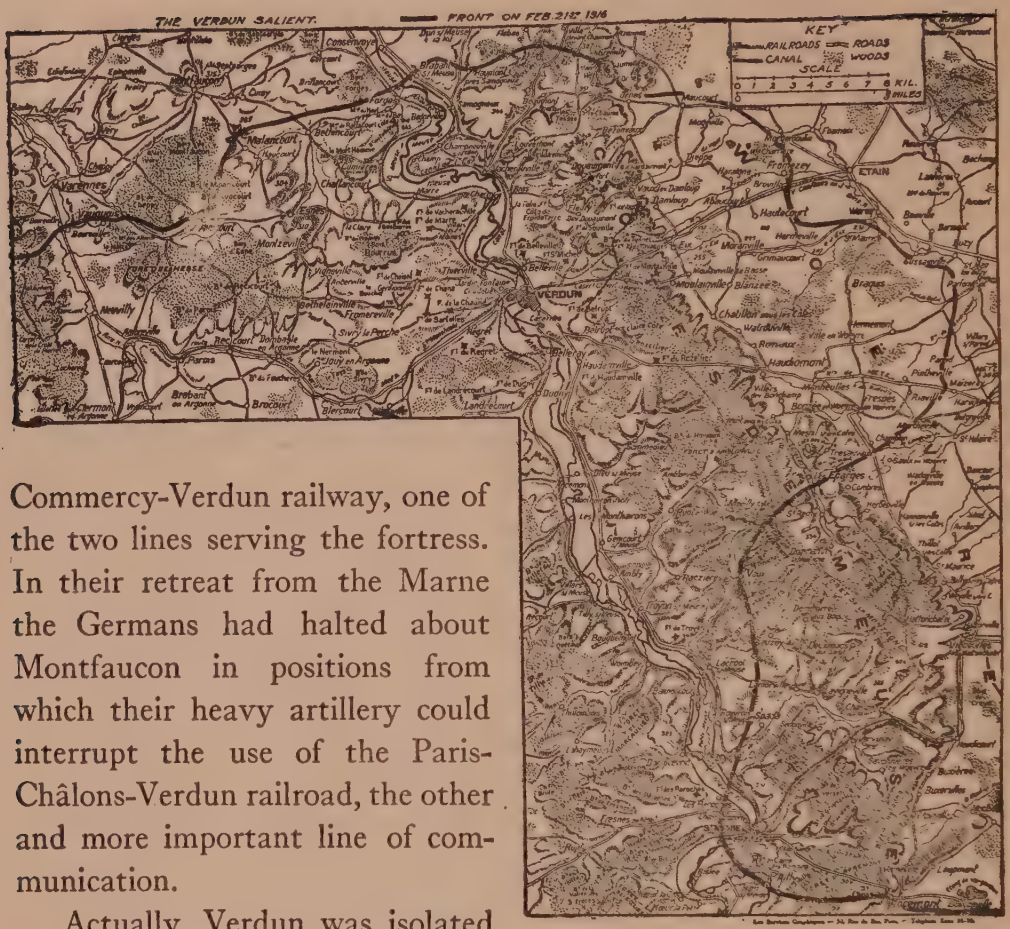
was to be a colossal and ultimate attempt to crush France, to break the spirit of the French people, a blow "aimed at the heart of France." To spend half a million casualties in such an undertaking, were it successful, would be a sound investment. That it could fail to succeed never entered the heads of German leaders or the German people, once more intoxicated by the wine of victory in the east and in the Balkans.

Having the initiative, as Germany unmistakably possessed it; having the advantage of men and of guns, since Russia was temporarily out and Britain still unready; it was obviously necessary to strike, to strike hard and successfully before either could enter. And this, to a degree, was the old problem of the Marne campaign of 1914, which had failed —but by only a narrow margin.

II. WHY VERDUN?

The selection of Verdun as the objective of this great German attack —which was aimed primarily at the heart of France, not at any single military target—was made as a result of many conditions, which were little understood at the time and were long in gaining popular attention. In the first place, despite the strength of the old entrenched camp of Verdun; despite the great defences which had been constructed after 1871 and had made Verdun, alike in the military and in the popular mind, one of the greatest fortresses in the whole world; the actual achievement of German and Austrian artillery in August and September, 1914, had demonstrated that, for the moment, the gun had mastered the fort and the great strongholds, yesterday reckoned impregnable, had become well nigh indefensible.

The French had realized this before the Marne, and Sarrail had moved the mobile defenders of the fortress of Verdun well out beyond the fixed forts and into trenches. But the Marne campaign and the later German operations had combined to make the Verdun position not merely a salient, but a salient with many peculiar defects, viewed from the defender's angle. The successful thrust of the Metz garrison up the valley of the little Rupt de Mad, from Metz in September, 1914, had enabled the Germans to seize St. Mihiel and thus to cut the



Commercy-Verdun railway, one of the two lines serving the fortress. In their retreat from the Marne the Germans had halted about Montfaucon in positions from which their heavy artillery could interrupt the use of the Paris-Châlons-Verdun railroad, the other and more important line of communication.

Actually, Verdun was isolated from the rest of France, so far as railway communication was concerned. The little narrow-gauge line, which wanders up from the valley of the Ornain, near Bar-le-Duc, was quite inadequate for the task of munitioning a great army, if Verdun should be made the objective of a major German attack, and the French Parliament had turned a deaf ear to all the appeals of the army for the construction of a strategic railway to meet the necessities of the situation. Verdun was thus dependent almost entirely upon road communication for its supplies, as it remained dependent until the decisive phase of the attack was over.

In addition, the position itself had obvious defects which held out to the enemy the hope of achieving a great victory. While the trenches

held by the French east of the Meuse were along hills admirably adapted to defence, the force holding them stood with its back to the stream, which in late winter and early spring invariably overflows its banks, and the position of an army with its rearward communications menaced by a river in flood, once its lines were threatened, would be extremely hazardous.

To reinforce an army in this position, with the bridges over the river under artillery fire, to munition it sufficiently, would be a difficult task, and were the troops on the east bank ever defeated, their retreat might degenerate into a rout and into a real disaster. It was to avoid such a possibility that the French had withdrawn from the north bank of the Aisne near Soissons the previous winter, and it was the accidental destruction of a bridge at Leipzig, during Napoleon's retreat, after the battle, which made that defeat so costly to the great Emperor.

Verdun, itself, was without value. Vauban's old citadel was indefensible, although providing a good shellproof cover for certain departments of the defence. To capture Verdun, except as a detail in the defeat and rout of the French armies beyond the Meuse, would be of little permanent meaning, however great the moral effect of the success upon the publics, both German and Allied. But if, following a gigantic thrust, the Germans were able to insert a wedge between the French armies of the right, in Lorraine, and those of the centre, in Champagne, the war of movement might be resumed, the trench deadlock abolished, and the Germans might again take the road for Paris.

A successful wedge thus driven in at Verdun would conceivably compel the French to quit all their positions from Toul to Rheims, enable the Germans to cut the Paris-Nancy railway, and might compel the abandonment of all of northern and eastern Lorraine and the line of fortresses and bases from Châlons right down to Belfort. Actual possession of Verdun meant nothing, all depended upon the circumstances attending its capture, all was conditioned upon the success or failure of the Germans in crushing the French troops beyond the Meuse, for if these troops were able to make an orderly retreat behind the

Meuse, they would still maintain the whole French front intact; there would be no break through, only a local gain.

III. VERDUN TOPOGRAPHY

Verdun, then, was a weak point in the French line, the weakest probably in the whole stretch from the Somme to Switzerland, and this inevitable weakness had been increased by the neglect of the French to prepare and maintain their defences beyond the Meuse. This circumstance, known to the Germans in advance, almost led to disaster and made the task of defending Verdun infinitely difficult, and perhaps in the long run impossible, for Verdun was actually saved at the Somme, although not until the French defence had been maintained to a point where the fall of the city would have had only moral value.

Having decided to attack the Verdun sector for reasons which are beyond criticism, the German General Staff had to consider the point at which the attack could best be made. It had also to decide the character of the attack; that is, whether it should be, like the French effort in Champagne the previous autumn, a thrust on a wide front, which would have meant an attack upon both sides of the river, or a drive on a narrow front, which involved an assault upon the eastern bank. It might have elected to attack upon both banks at once, but this would have called for a concentration of men and guns now beyond German resource.

To understand the German plans, it is necessary to grasp the salient details of the Verdun country. The town itself lies in a wide valley through which flows the Meuse. Seen from any of the surrounding hills, it rather suggests a lump of sugar in a saucer, and the lump stands for the mass of the town, rising about the slopes of the citadel and crowned by the twin spires of the cathedral, the single conspicuous landmark in the town, while the rim of the saucer represents the surrounding hills occupied by the now useless forts. On the west bank of the river these hills, which draw back from the river, are divided by a deep, open furrow, through which comes the Paris-Verdun railway.

In the old days, Verdun, with its rocky citadel guarding the bridge

across the Meuse, was the key to the main road from Metz to the capital, that is from Germany to France. Taking Verdun, which surrendered without resistance, the Prussians had penetrated through the Argonne into the outskirts of the Plain of Châlons only to be defeated in the Cannonade of Valmy, in the wars of the French Revolution. In 1870, Verdun had held out manfully and German invasion had been deflected southward although the town ultimately fell to German artillery.

But since the Germans had forced the northern gates to France and come south through Belgium, Verdun was no longer an outwork of the capital. About Noyon the Germans were, in fact, little more than fifty miles from Paris, while Verdun was one hundred and forty. It is necessary, therefore, to dismiss all idea that Verdun was a gateway to anything. It was a position back of the French front, a useful base; its dismantled forts served to furnish cover for reinforcements and depots for munitions, but the town itself was no more important than a score of others similarly placed behind the firing line. The Germans did not attack the fortress of Verdun, which had become a figure of speech; they attempted to break the French line before Verdun, the trench line, as the French had endeavoured to break the German line in Champagne in the previous September. And like the French, they came near succeeding.

The real military value of the Verdun position was derived from the range of hills rising sharply from the east bank of the Meuse and marked on all maps as the Heights of the Meuse (côtes de Meuse). This range of hills, some six hundred feet above the river, separated the Meuse from the peculiar Plain of the Woëvre. They were, in fact, a sort of hog's back between two depressions. Both on the Meuse and on the Woëvre side these hills—which, in reality, constitute a plateau upward of six miles wide on the average—break down sharply. Looking out upon the Woëvre, from the crest about Fort de Vaux, in the early morning light, one could imagine oneself standing upon a cliff overlooking the sea, so sharp is the fall to the marshy plain, at that hour, hidden in mist.

While this plateau appears fairly regular upon the map, it is cut and seamed by an endless number of ravines, which descend rapidly, either

to the Meuse or the Woëvre Plain, ravines worn in the clayey soil by little brooks. There is thus an infinite number of hills, not much above the general level, but separated from each other. Each of these hills was the prize of a combat and upon the more important stood the old forts of Verdun. Most of the slopes, too, were covered by little woodlands, all of which were marked with names upon the military maps and all of which, before they disappeared under the avalanche of shells, were the scenes of desperate fighting.

When the German blow fell, the French were holding the crest of the Heights of the Meuse straight across from the Meuse to the Woëvre Plain, some eight or nine miles north of Verdun and about four miles north of the outer circle of old forts. To advance upon Verdun the Germans could only move along the top of this range, that is along the crest of the plateau, because the Woëvre Plain is absolutely impassable for all transport and even for foot soldiers during the winter and spring owing to its marshy character. Thus the German advance was in reality a push south on a front of from six to seven miles, varying in width as the Heights of the Meuse varied, between the Meuse and the Woëvre. The fighting was for the separate hills, which rose a little above the general elevation, and the woods and ravines were obstacles which gave a local character to the entire campaign.

Had the Germans been able to push south as quickly as they had expected to do, they would have cleared the French off all the plateau as far south as the city, driven them into the Meuse valley east of that river and below the hills, and the enforced French retreat across the river, under direct observation and fire, would have been extremely difficult. Here was the one possibility of disaster, which disappeared after the first week. But the main German operation was in this period always southward along the plateau, never westward up out of the Woëvre, and the chief operative front was never much over seven miles wide.

West of the Meuse and north of Verdun there is a considerable ridge running east and west, that is at right angles to the river and the Heights of the Meuse; this ridge marked the line of the old forts on the left

bank, but north of it are several detached hills, of commanding elevation, notably Hill 304 and Le Mort Homme. These hills were held by the French when the battle opened, and after the French line on the east bank had temporarily collapsed the Germans were still held up on the east bank by the flank fire directed across the river at the Germans on the Heights of the Meuse. In the second phase of the battle the Germans were obliged to halt their operations on the east bank, while they pushed the French off these elevations, but having done this, they resumed their advance on the Heights of the Meuse and the fighting on the west bank did not again rise to any magnitude.

IV. THE GERMAN PLAN

For this Verdun offensive the Germans had begun preparations at least a year before they made the attack. Metz, their chief base, was conveniently near to the point selected for attack; perhaps an additional reason why the Verdun front was selected. New roads and light railways were constructed in a circle about the Verdun salient as far west as Montfaucon, where the Crown Prince had his headquarters, and for many months the accumulation of munitions and material went forward.

For this attack the Germans planned to employ the methods used in the east by themselves and in the west by the French and British, but with certain improvements. The concentration of artillery upon a narrow front, now become familiar in all offensives, was retained. It was indeed expanded and not less than 1,500 guns of large calibre, including German 42-centimetre and Austrian 380's, were solidly emplaced. But, as an additional detail, it was planned to make the major portion of the concentration movable, so that the guns could follow the men.

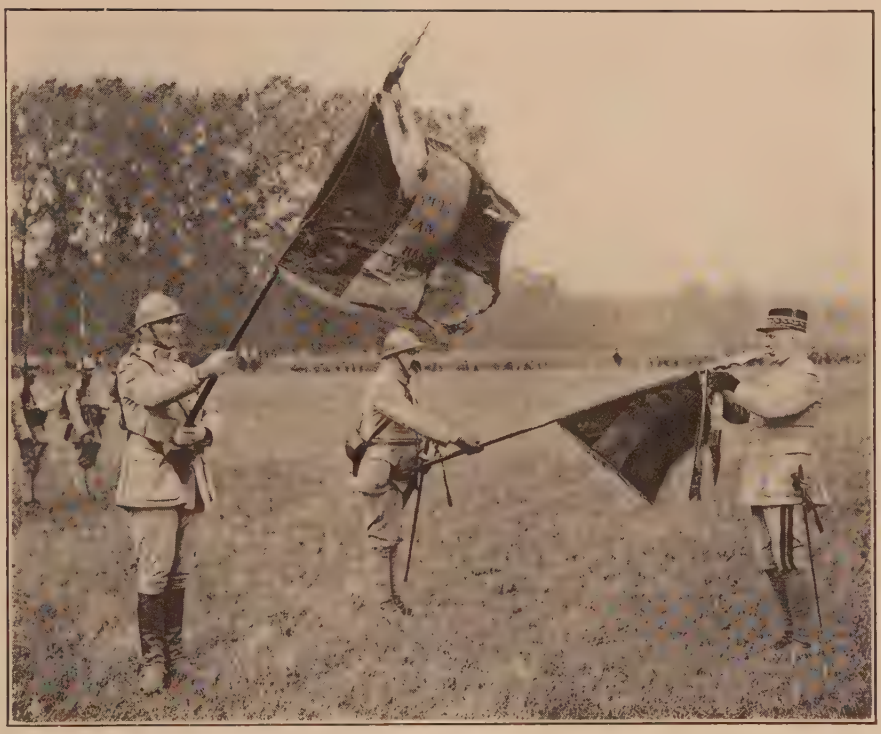
The French had failed in Champagne because they had been unable to get their guns forward to use upon the German third line after the first and second had been destroyed. The Germans planned to make their infantry little more than a subsidiary arm. The artillery was to destroy the French positions. The infantry, after careful reconnaissance, was to advance and occupy the destroyed positions. Then the guns were

to be moved forward and the second line reduced. Thus, the Germans calculated that in four days, with slight loss, they could reach Verdun itself, covering a distance of little more than eight miles. They calculated that the French losses would far exceed their own, that demoralization such as had occurred at Morhange in the opening days of the war would again occur when the French infantrymen found themselves overwhelmed by enemy fire and unsupported by their own guns.

In addition the Germans counted upon the element of surprise. And in a very large measure they counted justly. Certainly the French were aware of the growing concentration near Verdun; unmistakably their official documents disclose suspicion of a coming thrust in this sector, but no less unmistakable is the fact that the blow far surpassed any expectation; found them without an adequate counter-preparation; temporarily paralyzed their High Command, which, in the opening days, contemplated a retreat across the Meuse and the surrender of Verdun; and brought them within a narrow distance of utter defeat, for Verdun was saved by a margin so narrow as to seem, even now, indefinable.

To make the attack, following the guns, the Germans drew down to the east bank of the Meuse three crack corps, which were put through special training and were fed with a generosity unequalled during the war. These three corps, in addition to two which were regularly attached to the Crown Prince's arm on this sector, supplied the resources for the early phases of the attack; later, when the battle became a siege and the casualties swelled to the hundreds of thousands, many other units were drawn in, but at the outset rather less than three French divisions had to deal with five German army corps. The French troops, too, were territorials, while the Germans were the best that the Kaiser's army possessed and, in certain stages, fought under his eye, as they fought continuously under the observation of the Crown Prince, their nominal commander-in-chief. The real leader, of course, was not the Kaiser's heir, but Count von Haeseler the aged conqueror of Antwerp who planned the whole campaign and went into retirement when it failed, followed presently by Falkenhayn, the Chief of the Great General

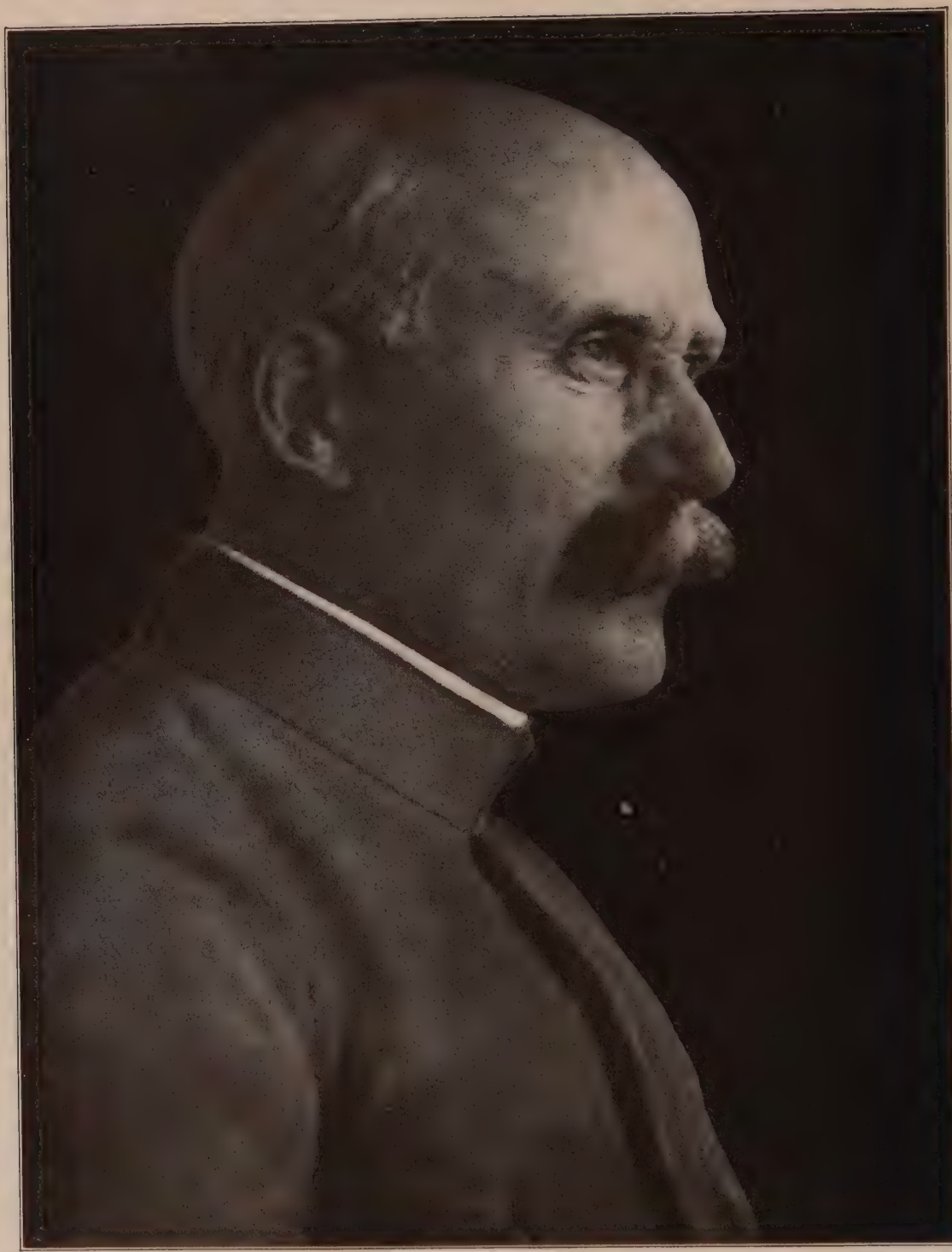
WITH THE FRENCH AT VERDUN



French Official from "Pictorial Press"

A REVIEW BY GENERAL PÉTAIN

General Pétain, the defender of Verdun, is here seen decorating the flag of one of the heroic French regiments under his command



From "l'Illustration"

HENRI PHILIPPE PÉTAIN, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMIES OF FRANCE

"More than all I saw and heard at the front and in Paris, the look of this man convinced me that Verdun would not fall, that France herself would not either weary or weaken."—*Frank H. Simonds*



French Official from "Pictorial Press"

A SCENE ON DEAD MAN'S HILL ON THE MEUSE RIVER

This hill tragically justified its name in what Mr. Simonds describes as "scientific butchery not equalled before in all the history of war." These French soldiers are triumphantly traversing recently captured German trenches



From "l'Illustration"

A VERDUN BATTLEFIELD

In continuous procession the waves of attacking troops passed the Petite Carrière



From "l'Illustration"

A WINDOW OF FORT DE VAUX, LOOKING OUT OVER A TRENCH TO THE SOUTH

"Looking out upon the Woëvre, from the crest about Fort de Vaux, in the early morning light, one could imagine oneself standing upon a cliff overlooking the sea, so sharp is the fall to the marshy plain, at that hour hidden in the mist."—*Frank H. Simonds*



French Official from "Pictorial Press"

AN UNDERGROUND HOSPITAL AT VERDUN

Constant and terrific bombardment made it impossible to establish above ground even the most temporary emergency stations. This is a ward in one of the subsurface chambers of a fort used as a hospital. The little dog in the foreground refused to be separated from his wounded master



French Official from "Pictorial Press"

A ROADWAY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF VERDUN AT THE BEGINNING OF THE BATTLE

—"300 officers, 30,000 men, and 3,900 cars were occupied in the automobile service, which was the real transport system. This system saved Verdun; the guns and divisions of the Meuse never ran short of munitions or food, while the regular relief of the troops at the front took place without delay or hindrance."

—Frank H. Simonds



Photograph by Paul Thompson

GERMAN ARTILLERY SUPERIORITY VANISHED WHEN GUNS SUCH AS THIS ONE APPEARED

With the aid of this gun and others of the same calibre the French launched their triumphant counter-offensive which regained Verdun



© *Western Newspaper Union*

A BATTERY OF THE FAMOUS FRENCH 75's AT VERDUN

This battery is engaged in barrage fire at Douaumont. "On February twenty-sixth the French counter-attacked on the Douaumont Plateau, all but retook the fort, and brought the German flood to a standstill."—*Frank H. Simonds*

Staff, who was responsible for what proved the greatest of German defeats since the Marne.

For several weeks before the main attack the Germans had carried on minor and deceptive operations on many fronts, operations which at once warned the French of a coming blow yet gave them no clue as to the point selected for attack, but rather, since the feints were along the Champagne and Artois fronts, contributed to confuse them as to the enemy's intention.

Finally, as the ultimate incentive to his troops, the Crown Prince, in the order of the day, on February 21, thus addressed his soldiers: "I, William, see the German Fatherland compelled to pass to the attack." And this attack, all the troops who were to participate in it had been told, was to be the brief prelude to peace, the crowning achievement of German arms.

V. THE FLOOD

At 7:15 on the morning of February 21, the Battle of Verdun began. Unlike the French at Champagne and the British at Loos, the Germans did not preface their attack by a bombardment of many days. On the contrary, they sought to preserve the element of surprise to the latest possible moment and relied upon the destructive effect of the heaviest concentration of artillery yet known in war, to accomplish in a brief period of time that preparation which was essential to permit their infantry to advance. Of this concentration, mainly made about the village of Gremilly and in the Forest of Spincourt, less than two miles from the French lines, French aviators reported, when it had been unmasked, that the number of the guns defied their ability to indicate them upon the map.

At the moment when they were assailed by this artillery deluge, the French were holding a front line straight across the Heights of the Meuse, from a point between the villages of Consenvoye and Brabant on the river to the edge of the Woëvre Plain, some seven miles to the east, whence it ran out into the plain for a few miles and curved back gradually to the edge of the Meuse Heights far below Verdun. But the

German storm was mainly concentrated upon the line between the river and the plain, although there was heavy firing all the way from Montfaucon to St. Mihiel.

Under this avalanche the French first line collapsed and disappeared. Before many hours trenches had practically ceased to exist, yet through this day the French held on in some fashion over most of the front, and the Germans at this stage, still adhering to their original idea of sparing the infantry and making complete artillery preparation in advance of infantry attack, attempted relatively little.

On the following day, however, the real attack began. Thenceforth for four days the struggle is only a confused and confusing attempt of the remnants of three French divisions of territorials—shelled out of their first and second lines, lacking any third line—to keep a front to the Germans and maintain some sort of a line between the river and the edge of the plain. Hills, villages, woods were fought for with a bitterness not yet known in the western war, save for a moment about Ypres.

At this time the weather was very bad, snow and fog crippled the aviation branches of both armies, the men who fell died of cold where they lay. Scenes recalling the fighting in the Wilderness in our own Civil War were enacted in a dozen of the little woodlands and ravines, and all the agonies of the American conflict were accentuated by the rigours of winter.

Under the weight of numbers and artillery the French troops were gradually ground to powder. Save for two brigades, toward the end they were without reinforcements; their mission was to hold to the last and they fulfilled it. Their duty was to exact the greatest possible price for each yard of German advance, and they exacted it. But they were from the outset a forlorn hope; doomed, and knowing they were doomed. After the first two days the fight became a struggle in open country, there were no more trenches, only shell holes, and on both sides the losses were terrific. Verdun thus instantly gained the place it was to hold for many months as the graveyard of the contending armies.

Steadily, however, the Germans pressed forward. They did not keep to their schedule, which should have brought them to Verdun in

four days. It proved impossible for the guns to keep pace with the infantry and little by little the Germans were compelled to lay aside their original conception of an advance, in which the infantry soldier was only an escort to the gun, and throw their troops into the furnace with ever-increasing losses. But for four days the advance did go on remorselessly and irresistibly.

On February 25, therefore, the Germans reached the last line upon which the defenders of Verdun could stand, if they were to make any stand. In these days the Germans had come down along the Heights of the Meuse for more than four miles. They had set foot upon the Douaumont Plateau, looking directly down upon Verdun, four miles away, and they had taken the dismantled hulk of Fort Douaumont, which had earlier deserved the name the Kaiser now bestowed upon it: "The corner-stone of the chief defence of our principal enemy."

Verdun itself was in flames and ashes; it had been hastily evacuated by the civil inhabitants; the town was under ever-increasing fire, and the Germans looking down upon it, on February 25, from the Douaumont Plateau might well have believed that one more thrust, one more day, would tell the story. Already the price paid had far exceeded all German calculation. German preparation in munitions, as in reserves, gigantic as both had been, had not measured the expenditure either in lives or in shells, but not even on the morning of the Marne did German prospect of a supreme victory seem more brilliant than it did on the night of February 25, 1916.

Eastward from Fort Douaumont, which they held with a firm if still challenged grip, German troops were within a few hundred yards of Fort de Vaux and little more than a mile before them was Fort de Souville. If these forts fell, the end would be sure and that end might bring with it a disaster to the whole French army east of the Meuse from Verdun to St. Mihiel. Yet, near as were these last barriers, it was not until the end of the first week in June that the Germans reached the ruined casemates of Vaux, and six months were insufficient to permit them to enter Souville.

On February 26 the French counter-attacked on the Douaumont

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THE FLOOD FEB. 21–26, 1916



SHOWS GROUND GAINED BY GERMANS.

Plateau, all but retook the fort and brought the German flood to a standstill. In point of fact, although the truth was hidden alike from Germany—still celebrating the preliminary victory and preparing for the fall of Verdun—and from France—at last roused to the full extent of the Verdun danger—the Battle of Verdun was over, the siege was about to begin. Thus February 26, at Verdun, like September 9 at the Marne, is a memorable day in all French history and in all world history. Like Foch's thrust at Fère-Champenoise, Balfourier's counter-attack on the Douaumont Plateau was a determinating circumstance in one of the decisive battles of human history.

CHAPTER THREE

VERDUN—THE FRENCH DEFENCE

I

THE SUPREME ACHIEVEMENT

The defence of Verdun is, perhaps, the finest achievement in the two thousand years of military history of the French race. It was—like the Marne—a rally, after initial defeat; it was—like the Marne—the flash of the collective genius of the race, after preliminary mistakes and weaknesses which had jeopardized all; but—unlike the Marne—it was not a sudden return to the offensive, followed by a swift and complete victory. The German attack upon Verdun lasted from February 21 to October 23, and during six months of this time the situation of the defenders was always precarious and frequently desperate.

It was the tenacity of the defence which amazed the world; it was the revelation of that obstinate and unyielding spirit which made "They Shall not Pass" the watchword of the soldier, that first amazed and then thrilled the audience, which was the whole civilized world. It was a resistance such as might have been expected of the Anglo-Saxon race whose stubbornness in defence is as proverbial as the *furia francese* in attack, but in the French it was the demonstration of qualities unsuspected even after the Marne.

The description of the actual occurrences, the offensive and the counter-offensive, can be simply told, but no power of description can justly appraise the real achievement of Verdun, because it was the achievement of the French soldier himself, badly led at the outset, plunged into a contest against hopeless odds, without the protection which ordinary care should have given him, superbly commanded in all the later phases, but first and last victor, in the greatest battle in French history, by his own courage, his own innate military genius—above all else, by his character, his capacity for endless endurance and unmeasured sacrifice.

At the Marne there had been a small contingent of British soldiers, who fought gallantly but contributed little to the outcome; at Verdun France stood alone. Hers was the whole achievement and hers the entire sacrifice. Had she failed, Britain would have been beaten before she was ready, Germany would have triumphed while the United States was still unmindful of the real issues at stake on the remote European battlefield. For the second time in the World War, France saved all the western nations. Verdun was, then, an epilogue to the Marne, a preservation of the decision reached on the earlier battlefield, which must forever stand with Marathon, with Poitiers and Châlons, as one of the supreme battles and victories of arrest, which halted barbarism on the point of destroying western civilization.

And almost from the moment that the first German assault struck the French lines upon the Heights of the Meuse, all France felt the greatness of the peril and magnitude of the crisis. Thereafter, all through the long months of agony, when the battle had developed into a siege, when the German troops still slowly but surely pounded their way forward, it was as if the whole French nation had set its shoulder against this ultimate portal by which the Barbarian was seeking to force his way to the heart of France.

All through these long months there was a never-ending sense in Paris, in the provinces, that the life of France was at stake; and not since the days of the incursions of the Teutonic hordes, when Rome was falling, has any great people more consciously confronted the peril of destruction than did the French. To be in France in that great hour was to feel an intensity of emotion combined with a steadfastness of purpose which was unforgettable. In that time France, the nation, was fused into a single purpose and a single thought. Bleeding terribly from the tremendous wounds inflicted by a more numerous and still better-prepared enemy, the French people, at the front and behind it, echoed and re-echoed the words of the first defenders: "They shall not pass."

It is this fundamental fact that must be recognized and cannot be embodied in any description of what took place about the old Lorraine fortress. When Pétain reached the broken lines, Verdun, by every law

of war, was lost; when Douaumont fell, the road to Verdun was all but open, and the Kaiser did not go beyond probability when he forecast the speedy entrance of his troops into the French town. To him, to his army, it must have seemed thereafter as if the very law of gravitation had been arrested to save Verdun. The defence of Verdun, like the victory of the Marne, was a miracle; it was the same miracle—the miracle of France herself, once more revealed to an incredulous world.

II. FRENCH PREPARATION

Against the storm, dimly suspected in the weeks preceding the German attack, the French had made certain preparations which were wise and far-seeing; by contrast, they had neglected certain essentials which almost brought a deserved disaster and which ultimately ended the military career of more than one French general. Indeed, as Falkenhayn fell when Verdun held out, so Joffre went ultimately into honourable but unmistakable retirement because the French nation, still grateful for his enormous service at the Marne, saw in the circumstances of Verdun evidences of failing energy and defective foresight which could no more be tolerated in him than those faults in his subordinates, which, at an earlier stage, he had punished unpityingly.

Chief among the failures of the French at Verdun had been the neglect to prepare a third line of defence behind the two lines left by Sarrail when he quitted Verdun, after his original defence in the Marne Campaign. Had this third line been constructed before the Douaumont Plateau, as it had been sketched, the worst of the suffering of the later months would have been avoided and the German attack might have been permanently halted at the edge of the old entrenched camp. Because there was no such line; because, in addition, the two lines which existed were not kept in sufficient repair; German advance, in the first flood, reached and passed Douaumont and gave German High Command reason for pushing the operation, despite the larger failure of the opening week.

Exactly the same neglect had brought ruin to the Russians at the Dunajec less than a year before. Prevision on this score had saved

the Germans at the Battle of Champagne in September, 1915, when the French had carried the first line and pierced the second. Equally inexcusable negligence was to lead to one more disaster to the Allies, when Italy was broken at Caporetto on the Upper Isonzo, in 1917.

When the German blow fell, therefore, not only were the existing French lines on the Meuse Heights in bad condition; not merely were their defenders territorials and not first-line troops (a circumstance hardly to be mentioned now, in view of the defence made by these territorials); but there was lacking a solid third line to which to retire when the first two lines were pierced.

The neglect of the railway communications is chargeable to the French politician and not to the French army. But for the preparation made by the General Staff, when the effort to obtain a new railway line failed, Verdun would have been doomed at the outset. But against such an emergency as was now to come, the Staff had completed a plan by which an army of 250,000 men, with all its supplies and material, could be moved by automobile transport to the Verdun sector. It had reconstructed the highways, it had provided the motor transport. In this preparation lay the salvation of the city.

Thus, on the eve of the German assault, the French were holding the Heights of the Meuse, facing the coming tempest with barely three divisions of territorials, occupying trenches no longer in the best state of repair, having behind them a river in flood, supported by little or no heavy artillery, and—whatever the unrest and uneasiness in the mind of the High Command—unwarned, in any adequate measure, of what was to come. They were occupying a sector which had been long quiet and was reckoned impregnable by those who looked at the impressive heights beyond the river and paid too little attention to the actual weaknesses of the position, viewed as a whole.

Despite all these circumstances, long established and no more to be disputed, there grew up—and persists—a legend that, in attacking Verdun, the Germans walked into a trap skilfully set for them by Joffre; that from the beginning to the end of the struggle they were actually the

victims of strategy which had foreseen all and provided against all emergencies. Nothing is further from the truth. The French at Verdun were surprised at least as completely as were the Russians at the Dunajec. They were surprised with insufficient defences, with no proper system of support lines behind them, their existing lines were torn to pieces in the first four days of bombardment, and for most of the first week the French fought in open country far behind the last line of prepared trenches which had belonged to them on February 20.

The French achievement was greater in view of these handicaps at the start, but so was the sacrifice, the sacrifice which began when Balfourier's "Iron Division" was compelled to counter-attack and hold on under annihilating artillery fire, while a new line of trenches was constructed and a defensive position organized. This is the tragedy of the Verdun story, known to all France even in the earliest days, but long hidden from the world.

III. THE DECISION TO FIGHT

When the first artillery bombardment signalled to the French High Command the new German activity, it was impossible for Joffre and his associates to act immediately. Time must be allowed to find out whether the Verdun operation was a real attack or a mere feint. If it was a feint, then to hurry an army to this point might be to leave the real objective of the enemy unguarded. Thus, while preparations were made to set in motion the transport machinery, which had been prepared, no real steps were taken to relieve the troops defending the Heights of the Meuse until February 24.

By this time there was no longer any mistaking the magnitude of the German thrust. Indeed, the real question had now become whether it would be wise or even safe to defend the east bank of the Meuse at all. Joffre, himself, inclined to the belief that it would be unwise and even perilous. Under pressure from Paris he sent his chief adviser —General de Castelnau, the defender of Nancy—to Verdun to make the great decision. Upon Castelnau devolved the duty of deciding whether a new French army would be thrown across the Meuse to de-

fend the eastern hills, or the whole French line drawn back from the east bank of the river from Verdun straight down to St. Mihiel.

In the latter case Germany would justly claim a very considerable victory. Verdun might fall, the Germans would be solidly established on the line of the Meuse if they should later have to retreat; but the new French position, resting on the western hills, would doubtless hold; the German advance would be halted at the western edge of the river, and the success would be local, not decisive. Given the extent of German advance already achieved, to throw a great army across the flooded river, whose crossings were now under German observation and fire, might be to court disaster. Unmistakably the memory of Sedan and that other political interference were in Joffre's mind when he inclined to refuse the German challenge and retreat.

Paris, the politicians, the Government, on the other hand, recognized the moral value of Verdun. They perceived the degree to which the German public would be elated, the French nation depressed by the loss of a city which, in the minds of both countries, was still the cornerstone of French defence, despite the fact that contemporary war had robbed it of this distinction. There was, then, in these days, a real crisis in Paris as the probability of the fall of Verdun became more and more apparent and the views of the French Generalissimo were more and more widely known.

Once at Verdun, however, Castelnau decided for the defence. He saw both the moral and the military significance, he recognized Verdun to be the same problem which he had solved at Nancy. On his word the decision to defend was made, the French High Command accepted the battle challenge of the German. And as the first step in the defence, Castelnau summoned Pétain—the man who had saved the situation at Soissons in the preceding winter, gained reputation at the Artois fighting, and won real fame in the Battle of Champagne, which had been of his planning. The next day Pétain was on the spot; the new phase was about to open.

But on February 24, when Castelnau advised the defence, there were still no reserves available and Pétain was not yet come. For two days

more the survivors of the territorials, who had met the first rush, were asked to hold on. That they did this may be reckoned for them as well nigh the finest achievement of the whole war. But during these two days their sacrifices were tremendous. And despite all their heroism and devotion, the Germans were able to set foot upon the last defensive line of Verdun, the positions which should have been fortified by the French and were not; and when Pétain at last began to throw his advance guards across the Meuse, Douaumont had fallen, the French line was broken on the Douaumont Plateau, and, for the moment, the road to Verdun was open.

It was this situation—"delicate," to borrow from the official phrase later published—which Pétain restored by throwing the Twentieth Army Corps across the river and against the victorious Brandenburgers, who had taken Douaumont. While the Iron Corps, the most famous in the French Army, counter-attacked, held the German advance, and rewon considerable ground, new trenches were dug behind them, new gun positions were selected and prepared; the men of Lorraine and Brittany, who made up the Iron Corps, opposed their bodies as a living wall to the German artillery and infantry, until the new army arrived and the new positions had been prepared. Magnificent this was, undeniably; but it was a sacrifice made necessary by the negligence which had gone before.

IV. THE END OF THE BATTLE

The Battle of Verdun may be said to have ended with February 26. To be sure there was no real termination, no pause between the battle and the siege, and by many military observers the great struggles of March 9 and even of April 9 are considered portions of the opening contest. They were, however, variations of the original German plan, modifications of the first scheme, which envisaged a swift, deadly thrust to Verdun through French lines broken by artillery bombardment. By the close of February the German had been compelled to alter his plan, and his alteration was the first step in the protracted siege, which lasted until October.

On Friday, February 25, when the Brandenburgers took Fort Douaumont, the German flood reached its high tide. The fort was not taken by storm, as the Kaiser's sonorous declaration affirmed; it was taken without resistance, and by surprise. In fact, so torn and broken had the French line become, that the few men who occupied this fort, now only a dismantled hulk, believed that they were far behind an existing French line and were surprised by troops which had penetrated a gap in French defence.

By contrast, on February 26, the French counter-attack—Balfourier's thrust out to the Ravine of Death on the edge of the Douaumont Plateau—brought the whole German rush to a dead halt. In fact, the storm had worn itself out. The French territorials, whose mission it was to hold on until the reserves could come up, had just managed to perform their task. They had inflicted losses so tremendous, they had opposed a barrier so obstinate, that the German reserves in men and munitions had been exhausted before the final blow could be delivered.

In a word, the whole German conception had broken down; it had not been possible for the guns to keep pace with the men. It had not been possible, even where the guns did keep up, to destroy the surviving French troops, who had been driven from their ruined trenches. In shell holes, in ditches, in the ruins of villages, they had found shelter and exacted an incredible toll of casualties from their foes. Lacking in heavy artillery they had used their "75's" with fatal effect and sacrificed guns freely that the artillery fire might be maintained to the last possible moment.

French High Command had drawn the thing fine. Had the new forces arrived one day later, Verdun would have been indefensible; had they come a day earlier, Douaumont and all the priceless gun positions toward Louvemont would have been saved. As it was, the last defensive position had been pierced and thenceforth the French were obliged to fight facing uphill, with their backs to the flooded river, while the Germans had direct observation upon Verdun and all the communications and bridges of their foes.

Yet defensible the position the French now occupied manifestly was, as the next months were to prove. Only one of the old forts, but the most important of the outer circle, had been captured, only on a narrow front had the old limits of the entrenched camp of Verdun been passed, and the thin wedge which the Germans had driven in offered no immediate opening for a final push to Verdun. On the contrary, the French flanks on the Charny Ridge and Le Mort Homme west of the Meuse and on the Vaux Plateau south and east of Fort Douaumont offered admirable opportunity to sweep the German centre about Douaumont with a converging artillery fire and forbade any further attempt to break the French centre until the French flanks had been disposed of.

As for the French, moreover, a new army had arrived, an army composed of first-line corps splendidly organized and well commanded. The momentary disorganization which was noted in Verdun in the first days of the attack—when terrified refugees, driven from the city by the bombardment, choked the roads, and every wounded man coming from the battlefield was a messenger bearing evil tidings—had disappeared. Above and beyond all else, for the second time in the war, and in her second great crisis, France had found a man. More and more, in the succeeding months, Pétain was to grow in stature until, with but a brief delay—while his Verdun-trained subordinate, Nivelle, was to have his chance and fail—he was to succeed to the honours and the authority of Joffre. And in history as Joffre will live as the victor of the Marne, Pétain's fame is assured as the defender of Verdun.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SIEGE OF VERDUN

I

THE GERMAN PROBLEM

On February 24 the French High Command—represented on the spot by General de Castelnau—had to make the momentous decision whether France would accept or decline battle on the Meuse Heights. To decline meant to abandon all of the French positions east of the Meuse, probably to evacuate the ruined town of Verdun itself, and above all else to confess a defeat—and a defeat which would bulk large in the eyes of the world, given the value which time and tradition had earned for Verdun. It meant to risk a disaster in a retreat across a flooded valley, but, all things considered, the chances of great disaster in this retreat were probably small.

On the other hand, to accept battle meant to throw a force of 250,000 piecemeal across the swollen Meuse, to face huge numbers now enthused by great successes and expecting decisive victory. The first French divisions to arrive must face this oncoming flood in the open field, without any but the most summary trenches to shelter them against the most important concentration of heavy artillery yet known in war. This was the challenge which Castelnau accepted on February 24; this was the "delicate" situation which Pétain partially restored on February 26. France deliberately chose to accept battle, to engage Germany until Russian armies should be restored and British armies ready. Once more France bore the burden.

By March 1, the situation had materially changed. The great German advance, the drive down the Meuse Heights on a narrow front and behind a huge artillery fire, had come to an abrupt halt, had indeed in some slight measure recoiled. Further advance was no longer possible in the centre, while from the flanks the French fire swept the com-

munications and rear of the Germans. Until these flank positions of the French on the Vaux Plateau and west of the Meuse were reduced, the main thrust must be postponed, and to postpone this operation in the centre was to give the French time to prepare against any new attack. The element of surprise, the advantage of overwhelming numbers, of incomparably superior artillery would have disappeared, when next the push was resumed on the Douaumont Plateau.

Accordingly, in the first days of March, the German High Command had to make its own decision, hardly less momentous than that of the French, less than ten days earlier. Should it continue the Verdun operation? The possibility of a supreme victory was unquestionably gone. The chance to break the French line, to drive a wedge between the armies of the centre and the right, and resume the march on Paris, between the Oise and the Meuse, had disappeared. Verdun might, now be taken, but it could only be taken after long siege operations, and taking it would have little more than a moral value if it were captured only after weeks or even months of effort. For when it did fall, granted that Germany finally triumphed, the French were sure to have prepared endless lines behind it on the admirably defensible hills that rise to the west of the Meuse Valley.

Puzzling as the problem must have seemed, the Germans, in reality, had no choice. They did not vainly throw away thousands and hundreds of thousands of good troops in obstinacy or blindness, as the contemporary reports loudly asserted. Their failure to win their first and greatest objective was not long in becoming apparent to them, but they had so committed themselves that they now had no real alternative but to continue. An offensive of the proportions of the Verdun attack in this present-day war requires months of preparation, the concentration of guns and munitions is a matter of many, many weeks. Railroads have to be rebuilt, roads constructed, light railways provided. Before the first gun is fired in a great attack, thousands of men may have laboured for six months, for a year, in preparing the way. And in the case of the Verdun operation, German preparation began fifteen months before the battle.



French Official from "Pictorial Press".

KING ALBERT OF BELGIUM AND PRESIDENT POINCARÉ OF FRANCE DECORATING FRENCH OFFICERS AT VERDUN

If any soldiers ever deserved decorations it was those who in successfully resisting the apparently overwhelming German onslaught had shown not only the brilliance and dash supposed to be typical of the French soldier, but the bulldog tenacity supposed heretofore by most Americans at least to be an Anglo-Saxon specialty



French Official from "Pictorial Press"

RETURNING AFTER THE RETAKING OF DEAD MAN'S HILL

"The French held on to them (Dead Man's Hill and Hill 304) as long as they could without too great losses and surrendered them finally, when the attack became too fierce and the price exacted satisfied their commander, only to retake them a year later with little cost."—*Frank H. Simonds*



VERDUN BEFORE THE WAR



Photograph by Underwood & Underwood

VERDUN AFTER THE BATTLE AND SIEGE

"As for Verdun, itself, it melted into dust and ashes as Arras had, as St. Quentin was to disappear. Yet the cathedral survived and to the very end there were houses, and even quarters, where houses remained standing, in which the troops lived."—*Frank H. Simonds*



Photograph from Underwood & Underwood

A NEW USE FOR A CHURCH BELL

This is the famous bell of the Vaux church as used on the Verdun front to give the warning signal, "gas coming." It was captured by the Germans when they took Vaux, but just as they were about to ship it to Germany Vaux was retaken by the French and the historic old bell was recovered



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THE FRENCH RETAKING A CAPTURED SECTOR AT VERDUN

"In four hours the victors had traversed the ground which it had taken the enemy eight months to cross."
—*Frank H. Simonds*



A PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE BURROWS IN WHICH THE DEFENDERS OF VERDUN WERE OBLIGED TO LIVE



French Official from "Pictorial Press"



Photograph from Underwood & Underwood

TYPICAL SCENES IN VERDUN AFTER THE DEFEATED GERMANS HAD VENTED THEIR IMPOTENT WRATH UPON THE CITY



A HAND GRENADE ATTACK AT VERDUN

© *Underwood & Underwood*

These men volunteered to attack a particularly dangerous angle of German trench. They were running forward, shouting and throwing their grenades, when this picture was snapped.

And once the offence has begun, the attacking High Command has but one of two possibilities before it, it may stop the attack or it may pursue it, but it cannot transfer its attack to any other sector on the battle front, not in weeks, not in months. Thus the Germans, when they could not force the Verdun positions in February and early March, could have abandoned the offensive but they could not have begun a new attack either in Champagne or in Flanders, because all their preparations had been made in Lorraine, and to prepare a new attack on another front would mean postponing all attack, accepting the defensive, sacrificing the initiative for six months at least, perhaps for the whole of the campaign of 1916.

This the Germans could not do, because within six months the British army would be ready to attack, the Russians would have recovered from the effects of their defeats of the previous year. Italy would be on the move, and France, unexhausted by any long campaign about Verdun, would be ready to support the British in the offensive already preparing along the Somme, as the Germans well knew.

Thus, while modifying her expectations, Germany had to continue her Verdun offensive. Her new calculations must be far more modest than her previous reckonings. She could expect, at most, only the capture of Verdun after a defence which would enable the French to assure the connection between their centre and eastern armies. She could expect a victory only at the cost of tremendous sacrifices, now that the French were alert and would soon be prepared. But she might hope that, together with the moral advantage of a victory—a limited victory, which would not pass beyond the possession of the ruins of Verdun—she would be able to inflict such losses upon the French as to preclude their participation in the summer offensive. She might, in fact, as her own statements presently forecast, "bleed France white" while the battle lines remained with little change.

In addition, German High Command might calculate that the sacrifices of France would arouse French protest and that this protest would lead the British to make a premature offensive, against which the Germans were at all times prepared. Such a premature offensive would

end all the peril of a summer attack. The whole scheme of an Anglo-French offensive in Picardy would go off at half cock and Germany would be able to preserve her Mitteleuropa without any other serious threat during 1916, in the latter half of which she might complete her operations against Russia and aid Austria against Italy. Finally, while possession of Verdun would mean little, viewed in the light of the situation as it existed, if Germany were ever compelled to retire behind the line of the Meuse, Verdun in her hands would mean the possession of a valuable bridgehead, while, in French hands, the whole position of the Heights of the Meuse would serve as a French bridgehead, threatening that new line, making it at all times dangerous, if not actually untenable, and preserving a threat to the invaluable Briey iron district only a few miles to the east, from which Germany derived the larger part of the iron ore used in her war industries.

Germany had to go on, she was committed to theVerdun sector, and the general situation imposed upon her the necessity to make some major attack. Her objectives had changed, her hope of a swift and decisive victory had gone by the end of February, but henceforth, on the only line on which she could conduct an offensive at the moment, she sought to cripple her French opponent by the infliction of heavy casualties and to avert a joint attack of her enemies in the summer by inducing Britain to make a premature assault in the early spring. Finally—since her Balkan work was not yet completed and the Salonica army a growing menace—she might calculate by her threat in Lorraine to persuade her enemies to withhold troops from Macedonia.

Of all these objectives the Germans, at the most, realized only the negative purposes. The French blow at the Somme was, probably, less powerful than it would have been had there been no long-drawn-out killing on the Heights of the Meuse. The army at Salonica was not sufficiently reinforced to enable it to coöperate when Rumania entered the war. But for this lessening of future menaces, Germany paid a tremendous immediate price. And it may be questioned whether any victory that would have been possible at the Somme could have had a

greater moral or material consequence than the final French achievement about Verdun in October and December, when the lost forts were retaken and in a few hours the Germans were thrown out of all their conquests, with a loss of prisoners and guns beyond even Napoleonic achievement.

As for the British, they did promptly and gladly volunteer to make the attack, which the Germans hoped for and expected. But Joffre wisely forbade this, and the British, at his direction, were compelled to limit their contribution to the French to taking over one more sector of the French front, which brought the British lines well down toward the Somme and released at least one more French army for service elsewhere on the line, either at Verdun or at some other point, from which other units had been withdrawn to reinforce Pétain.

From February to August the Verdun siege was, first of all, a struggle to inflict losses, not to achieve any local decision or gain any position which had decisive military value. It was a battle fought in Lorraine by the French and by the Germans, the former seeking to give the British time to organize the Somme offensive, the latter endeavouring to make that offensive impossible by wasting French forces and thus forcing British attack. When the Battle of the Somme began, Verdun was in deadly peril, and the peril of Verdun slightly hastened the Somme stroke, but it is hardly to be conceived now, in the face of the evidence we possess, that the Somme could have led to decisive victory had there been no Siege of Verdun or that materially greater results could have been realized at the Somme than were realized along the Meuse had the French refused battle and retreated behind Verdun.

When the French High Command perceived that the Germans were fully committed to the Verdun operation, they deliberately accepted the challenge and all that happened thereafter was in accordance with French calculation. The French High Command very frankly accepted a risk—considerable at the outset, because of the chaotic condition of French defence beyond the Meuse—in the belief that it could ruin German strategic combinations; defend Verdun, which had only moral and local value; inflict upon the Germans a terrific if not a deadly loss

in casualties, and give the British and Russians time to prepare their new offensives.

And in the main the French High Command realized all its objectives. The Germans lost far more heavily than the French, although the losses of both were probably exaggerated at the time. They finally surrendered all the positions which they had gained, together with many guns and prisoners. The world steadily fixed its eyes upon the geographical entity, which was the city and the old forts of Verdun. It measured the situation by the approach of Germany to the Vauban citadel and the French victory by the subsequent expulsion of the Germans from all the area of the entrenched camp. But neither French nor German strategy after the opening days concerned itself with these details, save only in bulletins addressed to the uncomprehending publics.

One more circumstance needs clarification. The world spoke of the Siege of Verdun, but it was merely a figure of speech, for Verdun was never invested. The road from Bar-le-Duc to Verdun was open at all times and little troubled by artillery fire, despite occasional barrages. The narrow-gauge line coming up from Bar-le-Duc was also in operation but its capacity was slight. By contrast, 300 officers, 30,000 men, and 3,900 cars were occupied in the automobile service, which was the real transport system. This system saved Verdun; the guns and divisions east of the Meuse never ran short of munitions or food, while the regular relief of the troops at the front took place without delay or hindrance.

In reality the Siege of Verdun was no more a siege than the Battle of the Somme was a siege of Bapaume or Péronne. It was one more incident in trench warfare, differing little, except as the nature of the country differed, from the later battles of the Somme and of the Flanders campaign of 1917. In Champagne in 1915 the French had been able to cut their losses and terminate their offensive whenever the cost became out of proportion to the immediate or prospective profit. They could do this because the general Allied situation did not then require a major offensive at some point in the line. At Verdun the Germans could not follow this course because they were bound to

attack, and thus to prevent, or modify, the weight of attacks which were gathering at the Somme on the Russian front and at Salonica.

II. THE NEW FIGHTING

In this Siege of Verdun, which lasted with little real interruption from March to the end of August and did not really come to a close until the December offensive of the French had cleared the whole area of the entrenched camp, a new order of fighting was promptly disclosed. In all earlier battles the concentration of artillery had abolished the first and even the second line defences, and thereafter the assailant had either advanced to victory or been halted at a third line, and the struggle had quickly fallen back to the old familiar routine of trench warfare.

At Verdun the bombardment, which had hitherto been merely the prelude to infantry attack, endured for days and even weeks. Eight thousand shells fell daily for nearly three months upon Fort de Vaux. Trenches, dugouts, communication trenches; all these were soon abolished and never could be restored. Men fought in defences supplied by chance, chiefly in shell holes joined by some mere suggestion of a trench. The forest-clad hills of the Meuse Heights were soon swept clear of every vestige of tree or plant. The whole area was pockmarked with shell-craters, until looking down from an aëroplane, one might believe oneself examining the surface of the Sahara.

Organized lines and ways of communication were blotted out and roads reduced to mere trails; to step off one of these was to fall into a shell-crater and many men were drowned in such craters. In the fog and snows of the severe weather of February and March, 1916, the suffering of the troops on either side was indescribable. In France as in Germany, Verdun became a name of evil omen and it is probable that well nigh a quarter of a million of men perished in French and German armies combined, in the first ten months of the fighting; that is, through the period in which the Verdun sector was actively engaged.

No pen can describe and no brush paint the horrors of this siege, whether during the spring, the summer, or the autumn. The misery of those who fought is beyond all realization, the desolation of the coun-

try hardly believable, even for those who have looked out upon it. As for Verdun itself, it melted into dust and ashes as Arras had, as Rheims was to disappear. Yet the cathedral survived, and to the very end there were houses, and even quarters in which houses remained standing, in which the troops lived.

All the romance of the war of movement, the old-fashioned war; all the relative comfort which long months of experience had made possible in the trench-lines elsewhere, were absent from Verdun. Men lived in mud and ruins, they fought without shelter other than the shell-crater half filled with water which was frequently partially frozen. They were shelled for hours and for days without interruption. Ground was won only when it had been pulverized and the men who held it blown to fragments, and the smallest gain was frequently purchased at a cost beyond that paid by the victor in many of the considerable struggles of our own Civil War. In this contest the rifle played a relatively minor part. Apart from the artillery, bombs, liquid fire, asphyxiating gas, machine guns and the bayonet were the chief weapons of defence. In sum, the Siege of Verdun was a scientific butchery not equalled before in all the history of war. It was a butchery by artillery, primarily, but to artillery were added all the weapons that human ingenuity could fashion. And to the horrors of war were added the tortures of a relentless climate and a hostile countryside. Forests, swamps, and marshes—even fogs, rains, and blizzards—were details in the history, the horror, of Verdun.

This long-drawn-out agony was repeated at the Somme; it was at some moments surpassed by the horrors of the British and the French floundering in the mud and muck of the Third Battle of Ypres; but for concentrated agony and misery, for human sacrifice and human endurance, Verdun was, when it occurred—and still remains—a page unchallenged in human records. Indeed Death was perhaps the kindest friend the soldiers of Verdun knew, and that they welcomed it, scores of letters of German and French soldiers alike demonstrate.

And with the Siege of Verdun we enter a new phase of war. The Battle of Champagne, the Battle of the Aisne, these were but transitions from the Nineteenth- to the Twentieth-Century method, while First

Ypres was far more closely related to Waterloo than to the Allied offensive of 1917. But even the war of trenches had well nigh disappeared when the Verdun contest closes and it has become a war of shell holes, with the bomb, the machine gun, and the bayonet as aids to that artillery which now rules all and destroys all.

III. ON THE LEFT BANK—DEAD MAN'S HILL

By the first of March the German advance on the Heights of the Meuse had definitely halted, and while in the next few days there were spasmodic efforts to gain ground on the Douaumont Plateau, the conflict, after several interludes, shifted from the centre to the flanks, from the Douaumont Plateau to the westward, to the left bank of the river north of Verdun; to the eastward to the Vaux Plateau, south and east of Fort Douaumont.

This second phase of the Verdun contest, which lasted until the last week of May on their left flank and until the end of the first week of June on their right, is called by the French the "Battle of the Wings." For the Germans a shift in operations was made necessary by the position in which they found themselves when the brusque attack had failed to capture Verdun and the first rush had been beaten down. At this moment the French lines were shaped like a crescent, with the horns facing the German lines; and from these horns—formed by Le Mort Homme ("Dead Man's Hill") and by Fort de Vaux, on the Vaux Plateau—the French directed a converging fire upon the enemy's centre within the curve of the crescent.

Before they could push farther forward in the centre, therefore, the Germans had to deal with the French flanks—with the left wing at Dead Man's Hill and the right at Fort de Vaux. In the end they were bound to reach Verdun, if at all, through the breach they had opened in the French centre, because there they were nearest to their objective and there the ground was most favourable to their attack. But French artillery on both wings swept this breach and until it had been silenced and the horns of the crescent seized, no further advance in the centre was possible.

The two operations that make up the Battle of the Wings went on not simultaneously, but alternately, during nearly three months. First on the French left and then on the right the Germans attacked. New artillery concentrations and new infantry divisions and corps were brought up; German losses mounted rapidly, while the French, holding the unessential positions lightly and counter-attacking only when some vital trench or redoubt was temporarily lost, paid a far smaller price for their resistance. In point of fact, there was nothing more costly to the Germans in the whole conflict than the struggles on the west bank of the river during March and April, save possibly the brusque attack upon Vaux—that assault which failed on March 9.

Important as was the place which these struggles for Dead Man's Hill and the adjoining summit, Hill 304, occupied in contemporary reports, they had no direct importance; they did not represent an effort of the Germans to get Verdun by moving up the left bank of the river. The total meaning of their effort was comprehended in the necessity to push the French guns and infantry off two hills on the left bank of the river, from which French fire commanded the western side of the Douaumont Plateau, and held up German advance in the centre.

When the Germans began their attack on the left bank the French there were still holding the line occupied when the Battle of Verdun opened. This line ran westward from the Meuse along the south bank of the little Forges Brook, which enters the Meuse just opposite the village of Samogneux, lost by the French in the first days, the stream which our own Americans crossed in the first stage of their offensive between the Argonne and the Meuse more than two years later. A branch of this brook coming down at right angles to the main stream and parallel to the Meuse, separates Hill 304 from Dead Man's Hill and the various German efforts aimed at taking these two isolated hills, first by frontal attack, then by a push up the south branch of the Forges Brook, and finally by an attack from the west up the slopes of Hill 304, which commanded Dead Man's Hill.

The main French defensive position on the left bank of the river was not along the crest of the two contested hills, but a couple of miles south

of them, along the Charny Ridge, which was higher than either and extended in an unbroken line westward from the Meuse and more than four miles north of Verdun. Dead Man's Hill and Hill 304 were far outside the old area of the entrenched camp of Verdun. The French held on to them as long as they could without too great losses and surrendered them finally, when the attack became too fierce and the price exacted satisfied their commander, only to retake them a year later, with little cost, when they had regained the offensive.

This battle on the left wing lasted from the first week of March to the last week of May. When it ended the French had been driven south and off of both hills; they had lost their power to assail the Germans on the Douaumont Plateau by a flanking fire. Thus the Germans obtained the result which they had sought, but at a tremendous cost in casualties and not until after three months of intense fighting. When they had attained their objectives they contented themselves with occupying and fortifying the captured hills, and the fighting on the left bank was over.

IV. ON THE RIGHT—FORT DE VAUX

The fighting on the right wing attracted more attention, and will probably enjoy more lasting fame, because it had a single, clearly distinguishable objective, Fort de Vaux, and because the defence of this fort—later described in one of the memorable books of the war—constitutes an epitome of the whole Verdun epic and one of the finest and most appealing chapters in the history of warfare.

Vaux itself, stood on a broad, fairly level plateau, facing east over the edge of the Woëvre Plateau and north fronting Fort Douaumont across the deep ravine carrying the brook of Vaux. Little watercourses have here bitten so deeply into the clayey soil that Vaux is really almost surrounded by ravines and thus practically isolated from the mass of the Heights of the Meuse behind it, which bear the inner line of old forts, Tavannes and Souville, among them.

The Germans, who attacked Vaux from the north, advanced out of the valley at its feet, having taken the little village of Vaux-devant-

Damloup, just under the fort. As they advanced the contour of the hills gave them a protected sector right under the fort, the slope being too sharp to permit the guns of the Vaux position to reach them. Taking advantage of this circumstance, the Germans endeavoured to repeat their achievement at Douaumont and on March 9 announced that they had taken Vaux by a brusque attack. This was utterly untrue and compelled them to invent a successful French counter-attack the next day to explain why the French were still in Vaux. Rarely hitherto in war has a combatant been obliged to bestow an imaginary victory upon his foe merely to cover the falsity of his own claims of an earlier success.

From March 9 onward the battle for Vaux went forward with unending severity. Little by little the Germans crept up the Vaux Plateau, more and more closely their trench lines drew about the doomed fort, which was now nothing but a heap of shattered masonry and crumbling brick. By the first of June the investment was complete. Only a little garrison of some 600 men still held out; and this garrison, swollen by the survivors of other units who had taken refuge there, was beyond the resources of the fort to feed or furnish with water.

Immured in the underground passages of the ruined fort, the gallant garrison still hung on. All direct communication with the French forces outside ceased. Carrier pigeons supplied the lack for the moment, but soon the last pigeon was released. Then for a day or two messages were flashed by heliograph. But by June 3 the end was in sight, for the Germans were now pushing up and occupying the ground over the ruins of the fort and the troops of the little garrison had to defend themselves against an attack from above, as the Germans following their bombs down the narrow staircases poured into the underground passages below.

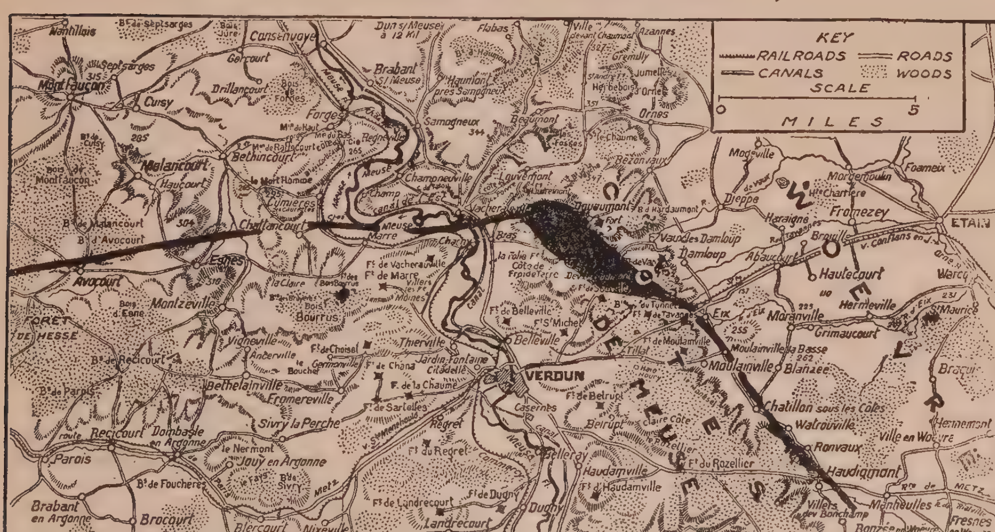
Still Vaux held out, its garrison, defending the passages and the inner stairways from gallery to gallery by bombs, enduring several gas attacks. The Germans poured the gas down into the hideous caverns, in which the atmosphere was already mephitic;even liquid fire failed to tame the spirits of the defenders. It held out until food and water were both gone. Then, and only then, Major Raynal—whose

THE BATTLE OF THE WINGS, MARCH TO MID-JUNE, 1916



SHOWS GROUND GAINED BY GERMANS.

VERDUN IN EXTREMIS, JUNE 15–SEPT. 1, 1916



GROUND GAINED BY GERMANS.

last message from his commander had been the announcement of his decoration for supreme bravery—yielded his sword to a conqueror, who, for once, honoured himself by honouring the brave man who had defended his post to the final moment of possibility.

The last resistance in the ashes of Vaux ended on June 7 and with this date the Battle of the Wings also ends. For more than a hundred days the Germans had been occupied in preparing the way for a renewal of their advance by the centre. These hundred days had been gained for the Russian preparations, which were already revealing themselves in a new offensive in Volhynia; they had been gained for the British, now approaching the point at which they might take the offensive with a reasonable chance of success.

Now in June the final problem was posed. Verdun had done its real work, its defence had achieved the primary purpose of the French High Command. Its fall now would only mean a moral defeat, the military purpose of the defence had been realized. But could the moral as well as the material victory be achieved? Could Verdun itself be held until that moment, now to be foreseen, when the Russian pressure in the east and the Anglo-French attack in the west would compel the Germans to abandon the struggle on the Meuse and transfer their guns and men to the Somme and the Styr? The Germans had planned to take Verdun in four days, and only now as the fourth month was ending, were they within sight of victory; only now was Verdun at last *in extremis;* could it hold for two months more?

V. THE ATTACK IN THE CENTRE

While the battle had raged on the flanks, the lines in the centre had changed but little. There had been a slight but immaterial German advance, while the French, on their side, had—by a brilliant counter-attack designed to relieve the pressure upon Vaux—stormed the ruins of Fort Douaumont and held them for one long May day, only to retire in the face of new German concentrations of artillery and men and this counter-offensive was to be the last ray of light for the defenders for many days.

When the final German thrust for Verdun began, the positions of the two contending forces were something like this: No longer facing south, but west, the Germans were endeavouring to advance from the Douaumont Plateau downhill toward the Meuse Valley and Verdun, four miles before them and in plain view. They and the French occupied halves of a gigantic letter "H," one of the sides representing the Douaumont Plateau, the other the parallel ridge which carried Fort Tavannes, and between these two sides ran the German route to Verdun. The cross stroke represents the narrow ridge connecting the two longer ridges and, itself carrying Fort de Souville. On this connecting ridge the French and German lines faced each other with only a few feet separating them and the whole German problem was by frontal attacks to force the French off this ridge, seizing first the Thiaumont redoubt and the village of Fleury in their immediate front and then Fort de Souville. If they could take Souville they would then isolate and capture Tavannes and advance upon Verdun along the three valleys which were followed respectively by (*a*) the light railway coming east from the village of Vaux; (*b*) the main Paris-Verdun-Metz railway, which between Vaux and Tavannes passes from the Meuse Valley to the Woëvre by a tunnel rather more than a mile long, and (*c*) the Metz-Verdun highway which borrows the least considerable of these depressions to cross the Heights of the Meuse.

As they thus advanced, the Germans would drive the French downhill, and, once Souville and Tavannes had fallen, the French would have only St. Michel and Belleville, forts which stand on the first slopes east of the Meuse and which, in the nature of things, could only be held lightly and for a brief time, since the retreat of their garrisons would be practically impossible and their destruction by German batteries on the higher ground to the east was bound to be only a matter of time. Forts, moreover, had long lost their old importance and even Tavannes and Souville were important only because of gun positions about them and the cover their underground galleries gave for reserves and for supplies of munitions and food.

June 8 to August 8 saw the final phase of the Verdun offensive

of the Germans. In this time the German line was pushed forward a little more than a mile, on the right it thrust the French off the Douaumont Plateau altogether and back upon the subsidiary and lower elevation of Froide Terre. Here the German advance was marked by the capture of Thiaumont Farm and redoubt. In the centre the German flood reached and passed the village of Fleury, attained the Chapelle St. Fine beyond, and halted exactly at the ditch of Fort de Souville, the extreme highwater mark. On their left, the Germans advanced from Fort de Vaux rather more than a mile, thus covering half the distance separating Vaux from Tavannes.

On August 8 the German line between the Meuse and the Vaux Plateau curved inward toward Verdun and then bent back to the Vaux Plateau; it was, in fact, a gigantic wedge driven toward Verdun, penetrating most deeply southwest of Douaumont. The Germans were now on the downward slope, less than four miles from the old Vauban citadel. They had flung back both wings of the French army defending Verdun, they had opened a breach in the centre. Souville, nothing but a shapeless mass of blackened ashes, was the single fragile barrier between them and an advance which would carry them to the Meuse.

But this advance was not to come. The Anglo-French offensive in Picardy was now five weeks old and it was no longer possible for the Germans to find reserves and munitions for two great operations. They had, in fact, lost the initiative. Had they been able to reach Fleury in March, there would have been no siege of Verdun, since an immediate French retreat beyond the river would have been inevitable. Had they arrived in May or June, there still would have been time to make the last leap. But in August the opportunity came too late. The Verdun game had been played out; Verdun had served the Allies' purpose; it had performed its full duty. In battle and in siege it had held for nearly six months. The military end had been attained in June, the moral objective was now realized in August; Verdun had not merely held out long enough to serve the purposes of Allied strategy, it had also supplied the moral victory, which was almost beyond calculation, given

the condition which Pétain had found when he came to Verdun on February 25. To the glory of Thermopylæ, Verdun had added the achievement of Platæa. "They shall not pass," the Poilu had said in February, and in August the Germans had not passed—the challenge had become a prophecy and the prophecy was already fulfilled.

CHAPTER FIVE

IRELAND AND KUT-EL-AMARA

I

BRITISH PERPLEXITIES

While the guns of Verdun were awakening echoes all over the planet and little by little the world was realizing that France was engaged in a desperate duel to the death to hold a new German flood until Britain could at last arrive with her new armies, three events of unequal importance, but in the nature of things achieving equal attention, served to reveal British public life and British public sentiment at the lowest ebb since that hour when the menace of Napoleon had been removed by the victory of Waterloo and the exile to St. Helena.

These three events—the Irish Rebellion, the Surrender of Kut, and the Battle of Jutland—were utterly dissimilar. The Irish Rebellion hardly rose to the level of the draft riots of New York City in the Civil War period. At Kut, Townshend surrendered an army but little larger than Burgoyne surrendered to Gates at Saratoga, and of the entire force not over 2,000 were British. Finally, Jutland was in all its ultimate consequences a British victory, as complete a victory as Gettysburg had been on land for the North in the Civil War, since it left unshaken that superiority out of which victory was bound to flow, if it were not abolished; and at Jutland it was not even shaken.

Yet the immediate consequences of these three episodes were unmistakable. Each, in a sense, revealed a failure; together they disclosed an ineptitude in governmental quarters which shook the nation to its foundations and finally led, with brief delays, to the overthrow of the Asquith Ministry. For, of Ireland, men believed that a supine Cabinet had closed its eyes to the coming of an outbreak already foreshadowed by all competent observers; of Kut it was believed that a new Gallipoli tragedy had been made possible by the same fatuous inex-

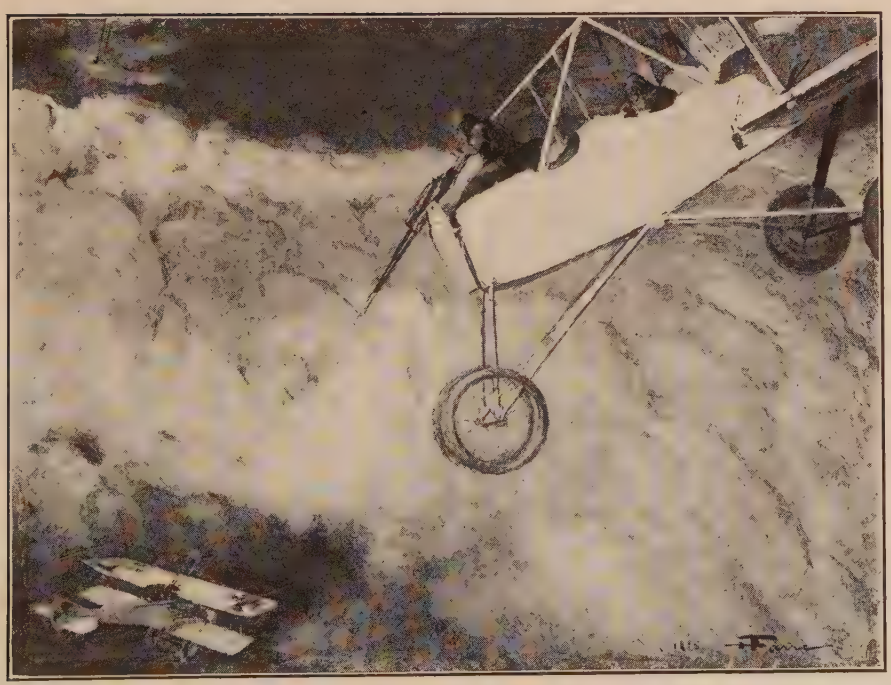
AËROPLANE WARFARE



Photograph by Paul Thompson

CAPTAIN GEORGE GUYNEMER

"Dead on the field of honour"



Photograph by Peter A. Sully

A BATTLE ABOVE THE CLOUDS

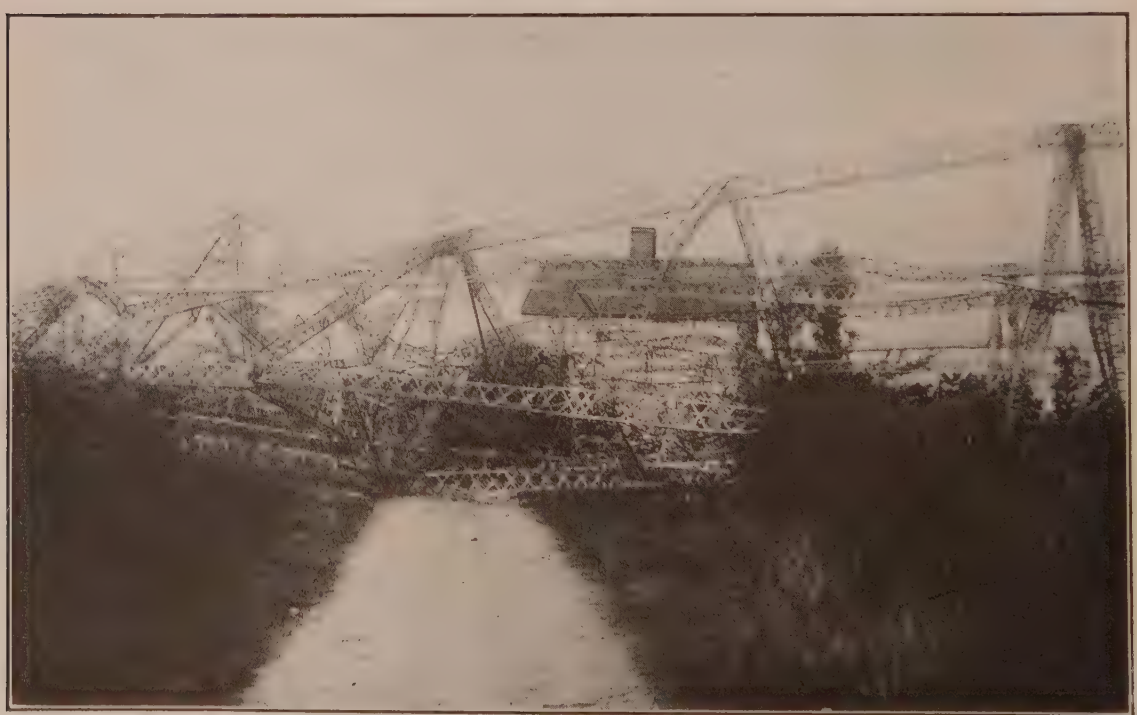
The eagle swoop of this pursuing battleplane on its prey, whose scurrying flight can be felt in every line, vividly illustrates the terrors of aërial warfare



Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

ZEPPELIN L-49, BROUGHT DOWN AT BOURBONNE

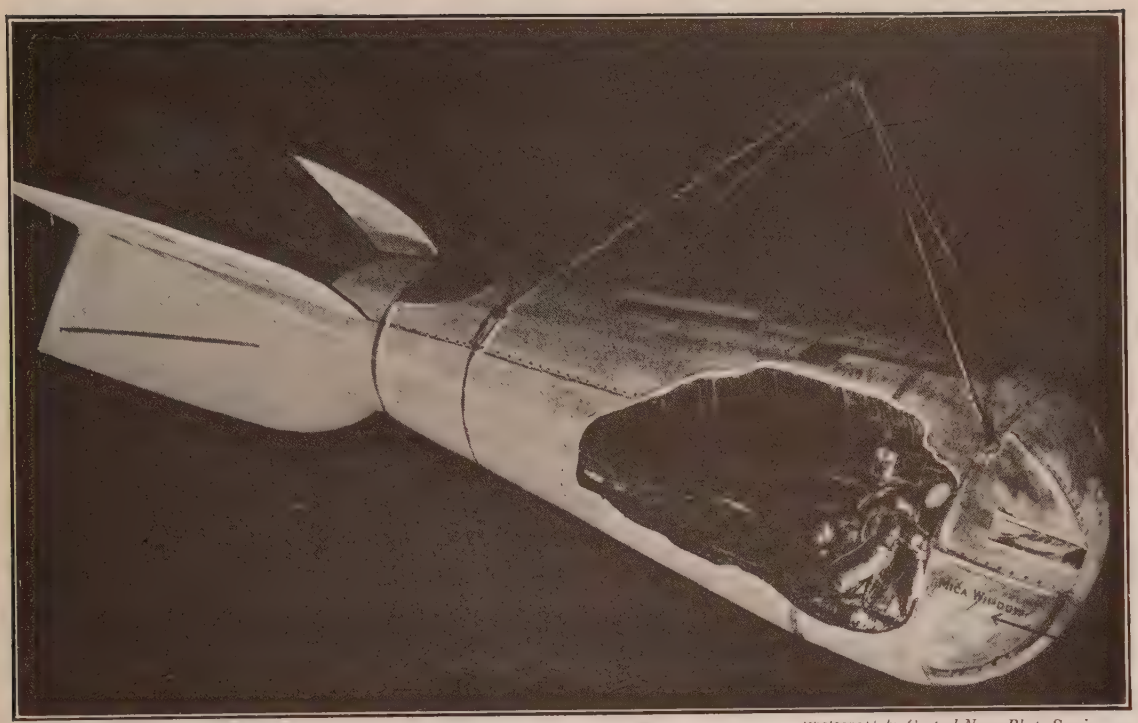
The air pilots tried to burn their machine but were stopped by a French farmer



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

FRAME OF A ZEPPELIN LYING ACROSS AN ENGLISH ROAD

This Zeppelin, the fourth lost in raids upon England during one month, was brought down in the outskirts of London



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

OBSERVATION CAR OF A GERMAN AIR RAIDER

This small car, with its one observer, is suspended from the Zeppelin which floats high above, often out of sight above the clouds



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

DROPPING BOMBS FROM AN ÄEROPLANE



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

DIRECTING ARTILLERY FIRE

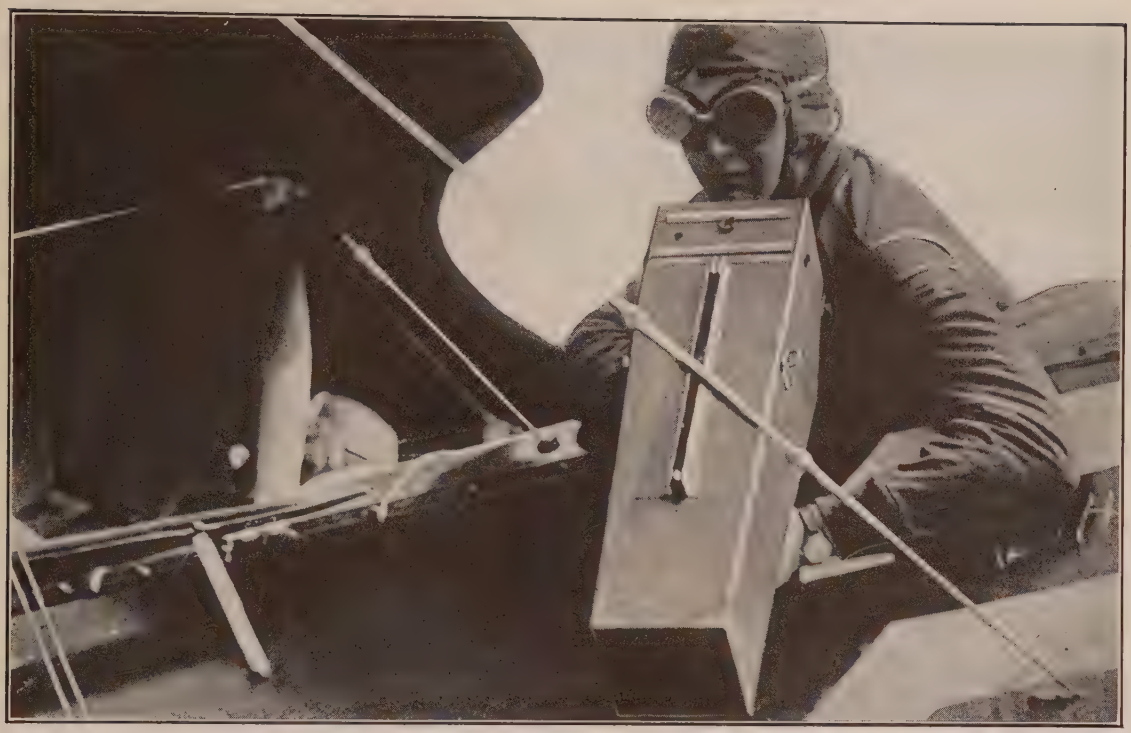
This service is attended by extreme danger



Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

WITH THE BRITISH ROYAL FLYING CORPS IN INDIA

Receiving a wireless message from an aëroplane



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

PHOTOGRAPHING THE ENEMY'S TRENCHES

This picture shows one type of aëroplane camera which was used in France



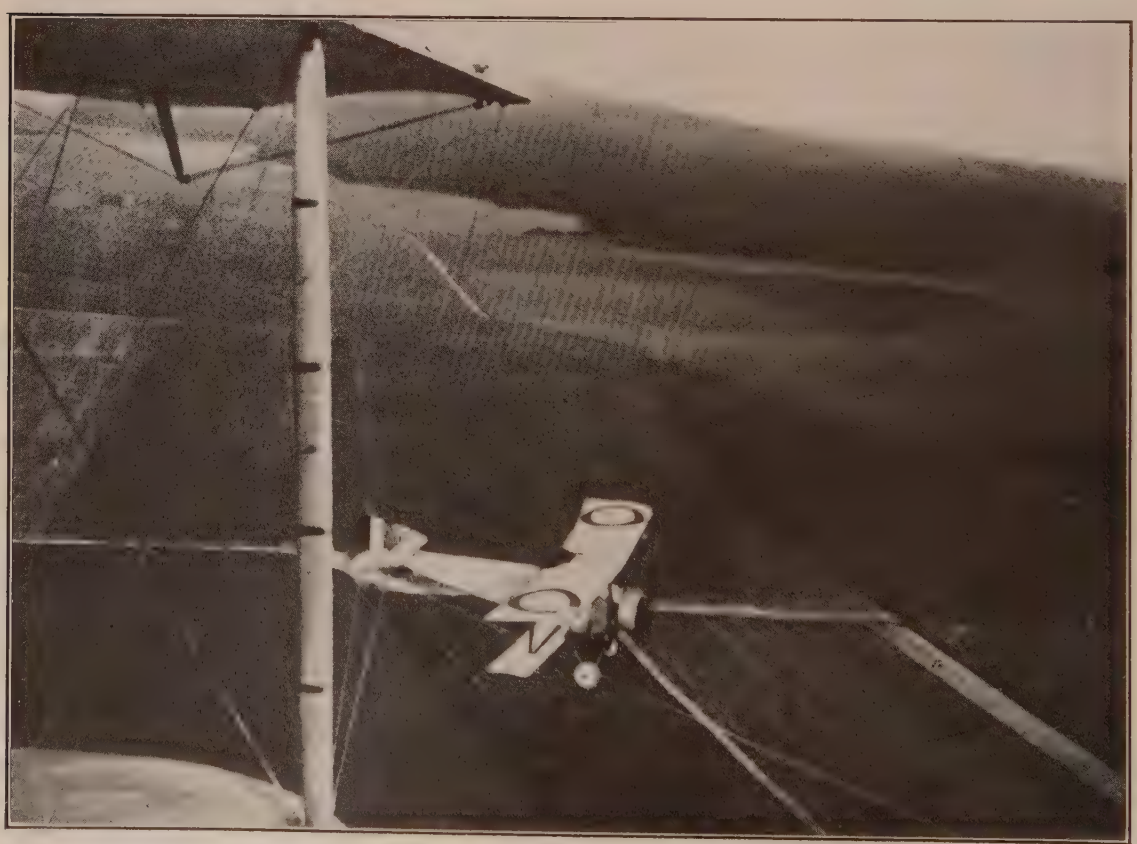
Photograph by Central News Photo Service

VERIFYING HITS WITH BOMBS



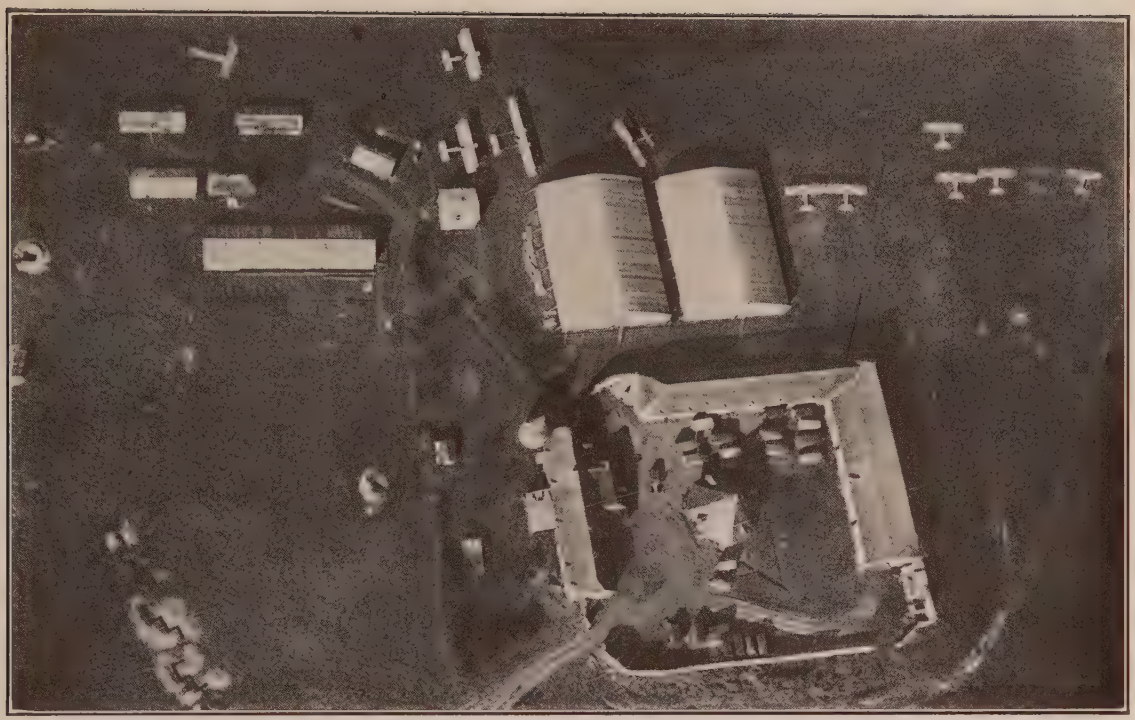
Photograph by Underwood & Underwood

A BLAZING GERMAN AËROPLANE PLUNGING TO EARTH



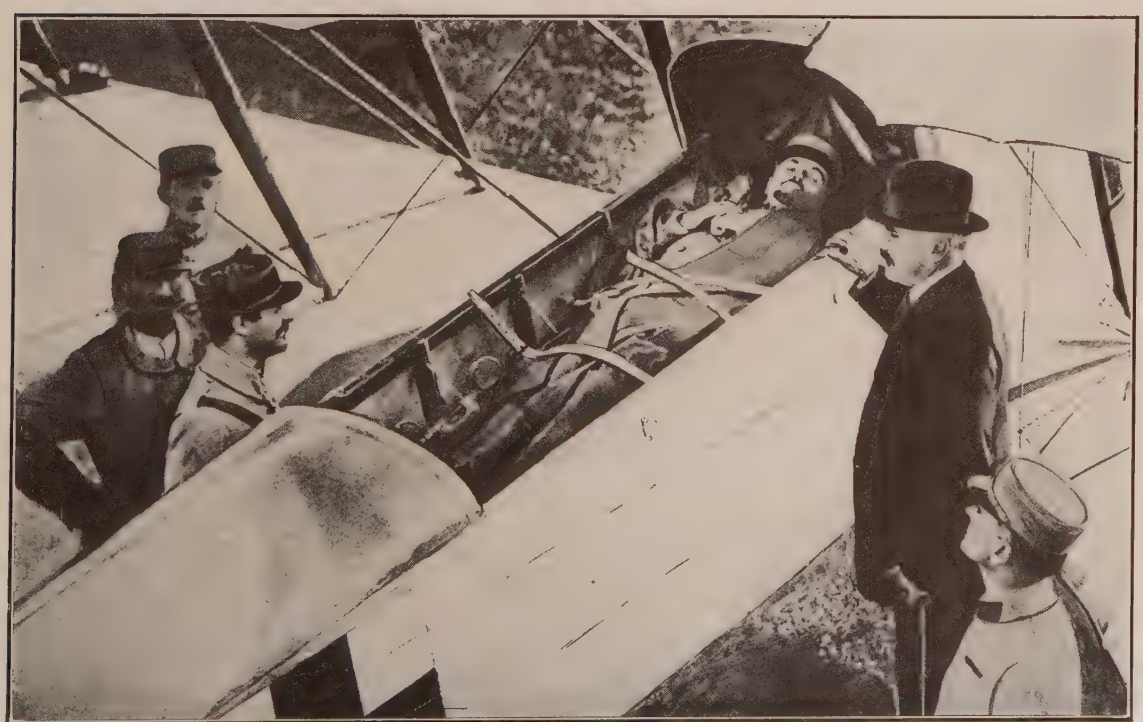
Photograph by Central News Photo Service

ALLIED AËROPLANE OFF FOR A RECONNAISSANCE



AN ALLIED AIRDROME

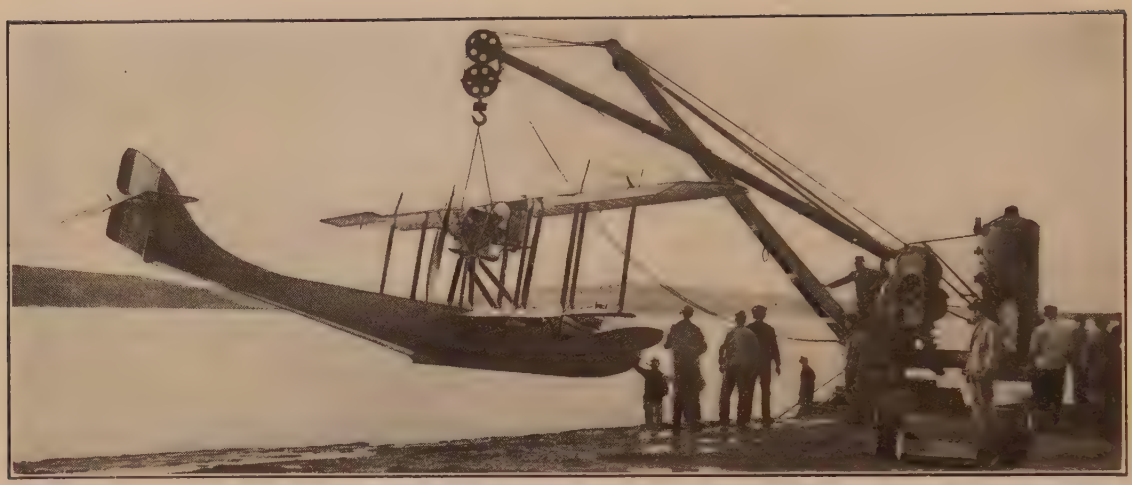
Bird's-eye view of an aviation headquarters close behind the lines, somewhere in France



Photograph by Underwood & Underwood

AN AËROPLANE AMBULANCE

The aëroplane ambulance has saved many desperate casualties where a few minutes' time means life or death



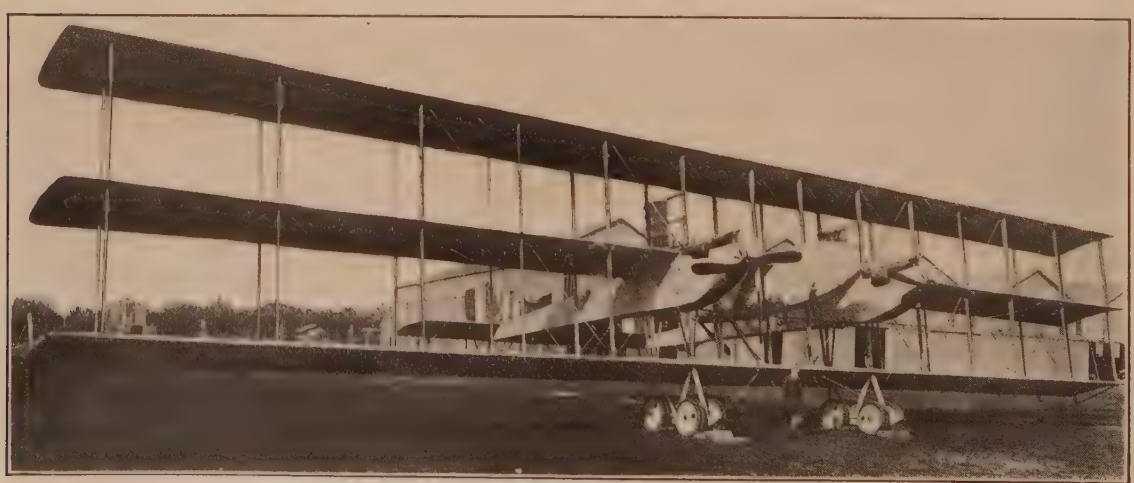
Photograph by Underwood & Underwood

ITALIAN HYDROAËROPLANE STARTING FOR FLIGHT



Courtesy of "Flying"

ONE OF THE 600 HORSEPOWER CAPRONI BOMBING PLANES



Courtesy of "Flying"

A CAPRONI TRIPLANE USED FOR BOMBING

perience and folly which had sent so many men to gallant but futile death at the Dardanelles; while in the case of Jutland it was perceived that an engagement—reflecting the highest credit upon British seamanship and ending indecisively only because of the lateness of the hour when the main battle was joined and the poorness of the visibility—had been so presented by the Admiralty that the nation and its allies were at the outset suddenly confronted with an apparent defeat, while the Germans were able to cover a terrible disappointment by false claims finding an apparent confirmation in the first official statements of their enemy.

From the morrow of the defeat of the British at Loos to the opening of the Battle of the Somme, the British nation was passing through one of the least lovely and most depressing periods of democracy. In our own Civil War we had begun the most terrible of all internal struggles with a leader at our hand, one of the great men of all time, who slowly but surely impressed the millions of the nation with his competence; who led a people at first unconscious of his greatness but at the last clearly aware that—however generals blundered, ministers faltered, politicians and editors alike lost hope—a leader, one of themselves, aware of their essential patriotism and loyalty, conscious of their capacity for sacrifice and for steadfastness, directed the administration. The South was not beaten by Grant and Sherman nor conquered by the superior industrial resources of the dominant half of the nation; it was beaten because Abraham Lincoln saw clearly and saw whole the fundamental fact that the country could not be divided, and that the millions of the North and the West would, in the end, stand firmly against disunion and national disintegration. His faith in the nation, his works based on that faith, saved his country.

In its hour of deadly peril Britain had no Lincoln; the very character of parliamentary institutions and the tendencies of recent ministries led directly away from the leadership which democracy demands in war and eschews at all other times. The result was a chaos and a confusion which revealed themselves in contradictions alike of policy and of public statement. The industrial struggles which preceded the war did not end

with its outbreak. War is like disease, it inexorably attacks the weakest portion of the political as well as the physical frame. Ireland was an old infirmity and the onset of the terrible plague of the war instantly assailed the weakened organ. British labour was engaged in a struggle of almost unprecedented bitterness when Germany set out for Paris, and labour remained conscious of the older grievance in the most critical hour of national peril, nor can one fix upon labour a reproach which was deserved equally by its opponent in the industrial struggle of the preceding decade.

II. THE GREAT DISAPPOINTMENTS

To understand the progress of events it is necessary from time to time to arrive at some appreciation of the conditions of the peoples at war, and the condition of the British people at the outset of 1916 is deserving of utmost attention. Magnificent as had been and was the effort of France, it was plain from the outset that France could not, alone, defeat Germany or even with the aid of Russia reach a decisive victory. In the spring of 1916 the war waited upon Britain as, two years later, with Russia gone, it was to wait upon the United States.

And in Britain there was still only a vague perception of the magnitude of the conflict and the reality of the British peril. In a very real sense the German attack upon Verdun at last brought home to London the fact that the war might be lost. It is impossible even now to present accurately the extent of popular misapprehension which existed in Britain as to the main facts of the war. The statesmen had first misled their people in the years before the coming of the struggle by the oft-repeated assertion that all war was unthinkable, and war with Germany totally outside the reckoning.

Surprised, themselves, by the arrival of the war; surprised in circumstances which deprived them temporarily of their nerve and almost led them into the fatal blunder of abandoning France; the statesmen who still controlled British policy never recovered from the original surprise. Having permitted the people to believe that war was impossible, they fell into the far more serious error of long concealing from the people,

alike by their public statements and through their control of the press, the true gravity of the situation. While Germany was erecting a Mitteleuropa from the Baltic to the Persian Gulf and sweeping victoriously from the Carpathians to the Pinsk Marshes, British leaders and British journals continued to propagate the legend that Germany was already beaten and approaching that disintegration which was to result from internal revolution and external disaster.

As a consequence the British people had to find out for themselves, and in the depths of agony and suffering, what the World War was. The Colonies, far more alive to the situation than the Mother Country, sent their sons to Flanders and to Gallipoli; and there they perished—as a consequence of mistakes, which were themselves beyond defence and calculated to destroy the confidence of the most loyal. And in the spring of 1916 the Canadians and the Australians saw with a clearness still lacking in Britain, and spoke with a bitterness which not until after Kut, was to appear in London.

It was not that Britain was unwilling to make the sacrifice necessary to win the war. On the contrary, the response of the British nation to the call for volunteers is the finest page in all the history of democracies. It was not that the army was unwilling to bear the burden of the terrible casualties which were imposed upon it in some measure by the mistakes of statesmen and soldiers alike. All that was best in Britain was in khaki or in the pathetic graves which stretch from Anzac Cove to the ever-glorious and ever-saddening marshes about Ypres.

In the spring of 1916 Britain was a nation of men and women—themselves ready to bear anything, to do anything—but a nation which craved leadership, demanded action, was ready to face the grimmest of realities, but was still ruled by men afraid to tell the people the truth; afraid to order conscription, which could only affect a few hundred thousands, after the millions had volunteered; afraid to deal in the awful truths which confronted them and confronted the world, because they lacked confidence in the masses, who were themselves worthy of all confidence.

France with an open frontier and a thousand years of history saw the

facts unmistakably on August 1, 1914. No illusion then or thereafter hid from the millions of French men and women the solid fact that the nation was engaged in a life-and-death struggle and that one of the only two possible outcomes of the conflict would be the destruction of France as a nation and as one of the great people of the world. France saw things as they were, and the completeness of this understanding of the facts explains, in no small degree, the character of French resistance at the Marne in 1914, at Verdun in the long and terrible months of 1916.

III. THE GREAT AWAKENING

It was only after the Irish rising, the surrender of Kut, and the first terrible belief that a naval battle of vital importance had been lost off Jutland, that the truth came home to the masses of the British Isles. It was only then that it was appreciated how disastrous had been the mistakes, flowing from a lack of central or intelligent direction alike of war policies and of war preparations. The British nation had looked forward to the campaign of 1916 as bound to see the decisive defeat of Germany and the advance of victorious Allied armies to the Rhine, but in February it suddenly beheld German armies rushing forward upon Verdun—beheld France compelled to meet the storm alone for many months, because British armies were still unready.

Not less appalling was the disaster of Kut to that portion of the British public which thought in terms of empire and knew instantly what would be the consequences for British prestige in the East when every bazaar from Bagdad to Bokhara rang with the stories of the Turkish triumph at Gallipoli and the captures of British forces—of an entire British army—at Kut. Egypt, India, the remotest and the most considerable of the non-self-governing colonies, were bound to be impressed by the progress of events; the whole of Asia, with all its immeasurable problems and mysteries, was bound to be stirred—with conquences impossible to measure—if, as at last seemed to be the case, British prestige was become a byword in the market place.

Finally it was with a fury essentially British that the news of the Dublin tragi-comedy—the absurd, ghastly Irish Revolution—was

received from one end of Britain to the other. Not alone in Mesopotamia and at the Dardanelles, in the Near East and on the frontiers of the Far East; not merely on the battlefields of Artois and Flanders was British safety threatened by defeats and disasters; but within the British Isles themselves there had been a rising. A hand was stretched out to the German by those who represented themselves the leaders of the Young Ireland and spoke in the voice which was the voice of the oldest Ireland—that Ireland which, when France was the foe, gave its sons and its heart to France and now offered, or seemed to offer, itself to Germany.

In France, in the spring of 1916, one had the impression of a people dealing, with courage, competence, and complete comprehension, with the most terrible fact in the history of the race. One felt that the people—the generals, the soldiers, and the civilians—had taken a firm grip upon the realities of their world. In France men talked about the strength of Germany at the moment when the readers of the British press, itself controlled by the British censor, were bound to conclude that Germany was starving to death, bankrupt, her people almost at the point of rising in rebellion to expel their Kaiser and adopt that British form of democracy which was revealing itself at the same hour in such unlovely disarray. British defeats were still disguised as British victories, or British heroism—undoubted and beyond praise—emphasized to disguise the fact that the heroism had but resulted in a hopeless slaughter, where men had been thrown against guns, unsupported by artillery (which itself lacked the right kind of ammunition).

The consequences were to be revealed in subsequent events. The fact stands forth, compelling attention. In the first two years of the war the British people lost confidence in their statesmen just as, in the first two years of our own Civil War, we of the North learned to have faith in Abraham Lincoln and in that faith found our ultimate national salvation. Clemenceau in France once swept away a ministry with the lapidary characterization of its head, "He has spoken, he speaks, he will speak." And while beneath the surface the British nation did organize itself and the manhood of that great people transformed itself, the statesmen continued to talk; and each successive speech disclosed

these statesmen as still unwilling—or unable—to bridge the great chasm between the world as they had described it in their speeches preceding the great conflict and as it now existed at the moment when the Germans were throwing their divisions of élite against the devoted but outnumbered and stricken French soldiers on the slopes of Dead Man's Hill and the Vaux Plateau. In England, then, there was the sense of little men, of eternal talk, of words which disguised the truth; the words of men who, when Germany was actually on the march, could see no foe in sight, although the foe was visible not alone from the watch towers but from the streets themselves. But the supreme tragedy lay in the fact that in the hour of grimmest crisis, the people saw their leaders thus, and the perception left them at last awake, but appalled by the revelation.

No people of any race or time did more splendid things than did British men and women in the opening months of the World War. No army ever died as the army of Sir John French—the regular army of Britain—died at First Ypres. The British fleet had taken Germany by the throat when it moved to its battle station on August 3, and that grip, never shaken in the following four years, remained a priceless contribution to the cause of the nations allied against Germany. It was, with the French army, the foundation on which victory was built.

On the material side the British contribution was not to be measured in money, because without it the war had been lost from the outset. Americans, looking back upon our own Civil War, could recall much that was identical with conditions in the bitter days of our own agony and our own disillusionment. Democracy in times of stress reveals the fact that, for the liberty it affords, there is paid a price in inefficiency which must be measured in the best and noblest of a race. Yet the difference was capital; we in America found a man in 1861 as we had found a man in 1776, but in an hour of equal gravity England did not find a man. Conscious of her mighty potentialities, conscious of the plenitude of the spirit of sacrifice, England longed for a Cromwell and found an Asquith.

The period of depression passed, when at last the guns at the Somme

sounded the relief of Verdun; it did not completely return when the terrible slaughter of the Somme resulted not in the expulsion of the German from France but in the gain of some sterile miles of shell-torn Picardy soil. But it was a natural consequence of the mood of the spring that, in the winter, Britain threw herself unconditionally into the hands of Lloyd George; it was a consequence of the convictions stirred by the first two years of the conflict that the Kaiser's peace proposal of 1916 found at least a momentary hearing in Britain—that the terrible disappointments of the campaign of 1917 produced in Britain, as in all the nations allied against Germany, a temporary wavering before the terrible road that had still to be traversed, if victory—decisive victory—was to be attained; even more, roused a passing suspicion that victory of a decisive character could not be won, but that a defeat of incalculable extent might be suffered.

Only the historian of the future who shall deal with events wholly completed, and with results at last established, will be competent to analyze and discuss the true meaning of the domestic events in Britain, in France—or, for that matter, in Germany—during the great struggle. Yet even in a fugitive narrative of events, still recent, it is necessary to set down the facts as contemporaneously revealed. Britain entered upon the World War at a moment when the whole British people was immersed in an historic conflict, certain to modify if not to revolutionize the whole character of British institutions.

In the social fabric there were grave weaknesses and serious evils. To remedy these, British statesmanship was labouring with little thought as to events beyond the narrow seas which were held to be the sure bulwarks to Britain. Between classes within the nation there was a bitter division of feeling which was revealing itself in political struggles of unprecedented acrimony. All of these struggles could not be abandoned in a moment, nor could those engaged in them at once perceive that all for which they contended was lost if Germany should win the war.

Every Frenchman could perceive that German victory meant French ruin; he saw the enemy through the open frontier; and within six weeks of the outbreak of the war Paris heard the guns of a German

army. Yet even in invaded France the extreme champions of social revolution could not permanently forget their cherished dreams of Utopian regeneration despite the fact that German shells were falling upon Rheims Cathedral and French women and children were the victims of brutal and beastly German oppression. It is not strange, therefore, that British labour still clung to the strike as a weapon against a traditional enemy, although the strike itself deprived their fellow countrymen of means of self-defence in the fields of Flanders, nor that capital invited the strike by adherence to what it still held to be its inalienable rights.

Only in Germany was there unity, a subordination of all domestic differences to the common faith in the opportunity for foreign aggression. Britons could not surrender their insular habits, British and French leaders and masses could not forget wholly their Utopian or their political schemes of the ante-bellum period. The result was the revelation of the Allied world in disarray from April, 1916, to March, 1918.

IV. THE IRISH REBELLION

The Irish Rebellion of Easter Monday, 1916, is at once a tragic and a ridiculous detail in the history of the World War—tragic in its consequences and circumstances, ridiculous in its size and comparative insignificance. Actually, it has no other relation to the war than the fact that it disclosed a condition which did infinite harm to the British cause in the eyes of the neutral world during a period of two years preceding the entrance of America into the conflict, while on the material side it claimed and retained the energies of a number of British divisions at all times necessary on the western front.

The causes of the Rebellion are to be sought not in any single episode of recent times but in the whole bewildering complex of Anglo-Irish relations from the Conquest onward. In three centuries British armies and British navies had circled the globe and laid the foundations of mighty colonies. Conquest had been followed by conciliation; in South Africa at the very outset of the present struggle a new example of

British success was revealed when Botha, who had led the Boers against the British armies less than a decade before, led the Boers against Britain's enemies in German Southwest Africa.

But what has been possible for Englishmen elsewhere on the planet has been beyond their resources at their own door. From Oliver Cromwell to David Lloyd George, sovereigns and statesmen alike have wrestled with the Irish problem and wrestled in vain. England having wronged Ireland in past centuries, noble-minded and generous Englishmen had sought in recent decades to repair the injuries, and Ireland had enjoyed in the years immediately preceding the war a return of prosperity—thanks to beneficent and far-reaching reforms. Nowhere in the British Isles had the land legislation been so just or so generous, and Ireland, at the opening of the Twentieth Century, seemed at last on the point of arresting the stream of emigration which for more than a century had drained the island of the best of its youth.

Unhappily, just and generous legislation did not and could not reach the heart of the Irish people. Through all the years of subjection to a foreign rule Ireland had retained a spirit of her own, a spirit untamed and unconquerable. Between Englishman and Irishman there opened a gulf as wide as that separating the Frenchman of Alsace from the conquering and dominant German. Between the two races there was a barrier of mutual misapprehension, of mutual incapacity to understand the other, hardly to be paralleled in the case of any other races in history. At bottom, the Irishman preserved, with respect of the Englishman, a distrust as profound and as complete as the mind of an intelligent and brilliant race is capable of preserving. And in the presence of that Irish mistrust—suspicion—English effort at reconciliation broke down—not merely in despair but frequently in passionate reprisal. For more than a century Ireland had been faithful to her ancient wrongs, she still remained faithful to them in 1916.

At the moment when the World War broke out, Ireland was on the verge of Civil War. The Asquith Ministry was preparing to carry out the provisions of a new Home Rule system, against which Ulster was in arms and the North of Ireland—led by Sir Edward Carson—was plan-

ning open rebellion, while British officers, whose duty it would be to suppress the insurrection, were resigning their commissions rather than carry out the mandate of the British Government against the North.

With the declaration of war, John Redmond, leader of the Irish Nationalists—who had laboured over a long lifetime to succeed where his old chief, Parnell, had failed, and win for Ireland Home Rule through parliamentary and peaceful methods—made a magnificent gesture. He pledged Ireland, Roman Catholic, Nationalist Ireland unconditionally to the support of the war, which he eloquently described as a war for human liberty. And for the moment Ireland seemed ready to follow Redmond. There was a prompt response of volunteers, the British uniform was tolerated in regions where it had never been before other than a symbol of a thing detested. But the golden moment passed. Instead of applying the Home Rule Act the Asquith Ministry suspended it; Ireland's reward for Redmond's pledge was the postponement of all her hopes and of her just expectations.

The consequences were inevitable. Redmond remained faithful to his pledge until death, hastened by disappointment, came to him; his brother died nobly at the front; but Young Ireland, the new generation, turning its back upon Redmond and that policy of orderly and loyal approach to self-government through parliamentary channels, threw itself into the arms of Sinn Fein, that new movement originally limited to the endeavour to produce an intellectual and spiritual renascence, but now become political and animated by the desire to achieve a complete independence by any possible means.

In Ireland, therefore, treason became rampant. Hands were extended to Germany; German aid was sought as, in remoter times, French aid had been sought. Ireland—Sinn Fein Ireland—armed itself, as Ulster had armed itself in the days preceding the war; and the Government, which had watched the Carson rebellion gathering, now sat still while a new and even more dangerous storm gathered. In all history there could be no more incongruous alliance than that between Irishmen and Germans, yet in the spring of 1916 the extremists of the

Sinn Fein looked to the Kaiser as a champion and saw in Germany the possible liberator.

The charge that the mass of the Irish people shared the Sinn Fein madness before Easter Monday, or even in the days immediately following, was not warranted. It was not until after the rising, with its grim sequence of executions and deportations, that Ireland—roused once more by a new accession to the list of its martyrs—definitively turned its back upon all compromise and conciliation and became a passive but a passionate foe of Britain. Yet in the weeks and months which preceded the outbreak the British lost Ireland. They lost it by a policy as weak as that of Buchanan in the closing days of his administration, when he closed his eyes to the rebellion which was gathering. They lost it by a refusal to apply that Home Rule Act already on the books, which alone could have fortified Redmond and his supporters, who were themselves rapidly losing their hold upon their constituents and upon the confidence of the Irish people.

The story of the actual Rebellion is briefly, all too briefly, told. On April 20, Sir Roger Casement—once a British consular official, who had earned an honourable reputation in foreign service, but was now become a German sympathizer and a German agent in the effort to rouse Ireland against Britain—was landed by a German submarine on the Irish coast. The next day he was arrested by local officials and sent to England to meet a traitor's death. But despite the fate of Casement, the Sinn Feiners of Dublin adhered to their programme, and on Easter Monday seized control of the public buildings and of many quarters of the city, proclaimed the Irish Republic, and began a fight to occupy the remaining quarters of the city and the castle.

The result was inevitable. A few brief days of a warfare of sniping, and the handful of rebels, mostly boys, were crushed on the arrival of British troops and war ships. By May 1, one week after the outbreak, Dublin was in British hands, but smoking ruins and shattered buildings gave to the Irish capital the appearance of Arras or even of Verdun. In the brief period of possession by the rebels, and as a consequence of bombardments, the finest quarters of the city had been

destroyed and its brief glory as the capital of the Irish republic had been fatal.

While Dublin was in arms the rest of Ireland, save in a few isolated districts, remained calm. There was no general insurrection and the local uprising was suppressed too quickly to allow the fire to spread even had there been any possibility of an extension to the south and the west. In the struggle 17 officers and 504 British soldiers had been killed, 800 civilians had been injured, and 180 insurgents and innocent bystanders slain. On the military side the affair was no more costly than a raid between trenches in Flanders, but its consequences were out of all proportion to the extent of the encounter, for in this week and the succeeding days, when fifteen of the leaders of the pathetic and insane affair were shot, the mass of Irish people deliberately gave their sympathy to the rebels, in whose operations they had declined to participate and upon which they had looked with disapproval.

Thenceforth, for the next two years and a half, Ireland was a garrisoned country. The tiny stream of volunteers dried up; the British Government could, in 1918, under the lash of Labour and following the great defeats of March and April, resolve upon conscription for Ireland and order it; but, having ordered it, Lloyd George and his associates did not dare to apply it. As time passed and the struggle with the Germans became more terrific and the prospect of German victory more unmistakable, British resentment at Irish refusal to share in the conflict increased. When the United States entered the war, sent her sons to the European battlefield, and began to bear the blood cost of the war, American sympathy with Ireland—always lively and keen in the first moments of the Rebellion and its tragic aftermath of executions—diminished, disappeared, and gave place to stern reminders that America could not forgive further Irish agitations which weakened British armies in the presence of the common enemy. This, however, was but an accentuation of the tragedy; hopeless and helpless, Ireland now became friendless, since both America and France, ancient friends and sympathizers, alike looked with amazement and then with indignation upon a sullen and self-centred Ireland, who placed her own wrongs

above the dangers to all civilization and, because she hated England, refused to fight Germany.

While the events are still recent it would be useless to endeavour to fix the responsibility for the Irish affair. Indeed, to explain it one must go backward over three centuries of history. What instantly attracted and long held public attention in all free nations was the tragedy of the episode. A people seeking freedom with a passion undiminished by years of disappointment now declined to strike a blow against the greatest enemy of all human liberty. A race which for centuries had deserved the reputation of the most belligerent, which had supplied three nations with its best fighters and some of its most distinguished generals, now declined to share in the greatest of all wars; the most charming and the most brilliant of English-speaking tribes henceforth resolutely turned a sullen and suspicious face toward all overtures and appeals and by this course deprived itself of its natural allies and strengthened the hands of its traditional enemies.

Only in Berlin did the events of Dublin awaken rejoicing. In Irish affairs Germany found an opportunity to denounce alleged British hypocrisy and confute Allied claims to the rôle of champions of small nations and defenders of the rights of self-determination of the weaker races. Thus, in every sense, the Irish Rebellion, insignificant as it was, on the material side was a moral disaster of the first magnitude—a disaster immediately pressing upon the British, eventually weighing upon the Irish themselves. Seeking liberty, the Irish people had made themselves the tools of German tyranny and separated themselves from the sustaining sympathy of all other liberty-loving peoples of the earth.

V. KUT-EL-AMARA

While the news of the Irish Rebellion was still holding the attention of the whole British Empire there came, on April 29, the brief announcement that the army of General Townshend—long invested in the Mesopotamian town of Kut-el-Amara and equally long forgotten by the British public—had laid down its arms. Once more it was the

moral rather than the military effect which commanded instant attention. A British army had surrendered to a Turkish force; Kut had now become an epilogue of Gallipoli; and as the British public and the British Parliament began to unravel the threads of the Mesopotamian adventure, a new scandal and a new folly were revealed.

The original expedition to Mesopotamia had been a wise and logical step, for the mouth of the Tigris and the Euphrates—the delta of the stream through which both of the great rivers reach the Persian Gulf—is as much an outpost of India as is Palestine an out work of Egypt. More than that, northeast of Basra are the immense oil fields which were of vital importance to the British navy. Finally, recognizing the German ambition to stretch her domination from the Baltic to the Persian Gulf and recalling the advance of the Bagdad Railway, it was essential that neither time nor opportunity be lost to forestall Germany at the mouth of the rivers of Mesopotamia.

Basra was occupied on November 23, 1914, by a small force sent from India. The oil wells were promptly secured, and until such time as a real expedition could be organized and British military resources made adequate to bear the additional strain, this was all that was needful to do. But once more the policy of adventure—which had lain behind the dash to Antwerp, the gamble at Gallipoli—reasserted itself. A nation which in its recent history had made the memorable campaign to Khartum, a campaign in which every element of chance was eliminated and nothing was done until everything was prepared—a nation which had the conqueror of the Sudan in charge of its whole military establishment—now permitted politicians to prevail, while soldiers remained silent or spoke their doubts hesitatingly. The result was a steady expansion of the Mesopotamian horizon with no commensurate expansion of the resources of the army engaged.

As Constantinople beckoned the dreamers, Bagdad held out an irresistible temptation to those who could see clearly the mighty results which success in Mesopotamia might bring, but blindly or obstinately refused to recognize how impossible of attainment was the success desired; indeed, the very failure at the Golden Horn added a new incen-

tive to undertake another gamble in the hope that victory at Bagdad might balance defeat at Constantinople. As a consequence, the insignificant force in Mesopotamia was steadily pushed northward. By October it was far on the road to Bagdad, marching into a hostile country, with only the river as a line of transport for supplies, with only a scant division available with which to conquer a region to which the Turks were able to draw unlimited numbers.

Still the advance went forward until, on November 21, Townshend encountered the Turks on ground of their own choosing at Ctesiphon, barely twenty miles from Bagdad itself. Attacking, the British made a gallant fight for it, but numbers overbore them; of their 15,000 they lost not less than a third in the battle, and after the battle there was nothing for it but to retreat. This retreat carried them back to Kut-el-Amara by December 3, and two days later they were besieged in their lines about this town.

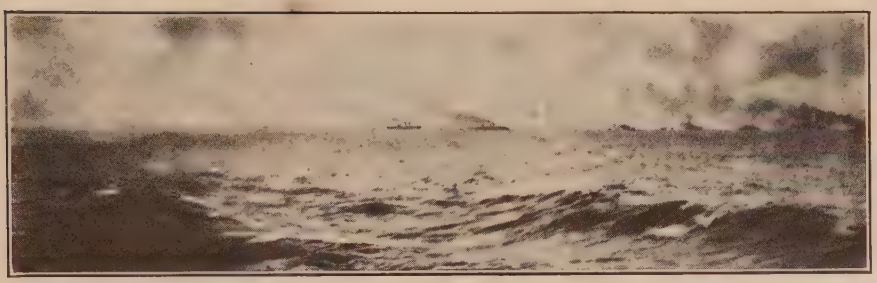
From December to April there is written a new story like that of Gordon at Khartum. There is the same frantic effort, made by the tardily awakened officials, to save the beleaguered army. New reinforcements are hastily sent from India, even from Europe. By January a relieving force has arrived within sixteen miles of Kut; it will advance over half the remaining distance in the next two months. But the effort is in vain; the Turks are too numerous, too well-posted, too ably commanded. The weather is unfavourable and the river rises at the critical moment. So finally, on April 29, Townshend lays down his arms, the Bagdad gamble, like the dash for Constantinople, ends in a disastrous reverse.

The Kut surrender was followed within a relatively brief time by the brilliant and victorious advance of Maude to Bagdad and beyond; British prestige was restored and enhanced when Jerusalem and Bagdad alike were occupied. In the larger sense Kut was but an episode; it came, however, at a moment which gave grim value to its lessons; it represented a useless waste of brave men and valuable material; it had no justification at the time and found no defenders subsequently. A parliamentary investigation presently revealed conditions unhappily

recalling the worst chapters in the history of our invasion of Cuba with an unprepared and inadequately supplied army.

And in comprehending the mood of Britain in May, 1916, it is necessary to recall the various landmarks of a year: Festubert, with its consequent shell scandal; Loos, with its bloody shambles; Gallipoli, with its story of impossible exertion and inevitable failure; and, last of all, Ireland and Kut coming at the moment when Verdun was revealing the true state of Allied fortunes and the real magnitude of the German peril. The policy of the British Government had been summed up by the Prime Minister as a policy of "Wait and see." The British public had waited, they were seeing, and in the revelations of April and May was written the political doom of Mr. Asquith and his immediate associates, who still in the main ruled in the councils of state, despite the substitution of a coalition for a party Cabinet.

SEA FIGHTING



ADMIRAL BEATTY'S BATTLE-CRUISER SQUADRON

was here engaging the entire German High Seas Fleet. Some of the ships are seen firing at the enemy, beyond them to the right and not visible in the photograph. The great columns of water are caused by German shells falling amid the British ships. Sir David Beatty said of this phase of the battle: "At 3:30 P. M. I increased speed to 25 knots, and formed line of battle, the Second Battle-Cruiser Squadron forming astern of the First Battle-Cruiser Squadron, with destroyers of the 13th and 9th flotillas taking station ahead. I turned to E. S. E., slightly converging on the enemy. . . . At 3:48 P. M. the action commenced at a range of 18,500 yards, both forces opening fire practically simultaneously"



From "Illustrated London News," courtesy British Bureau of Information

THESE PHOTOGRAPHS WERE TAKEN FROM THE DECK OF A BRITISH WARSHIP DURING THE FIERCEST FIGHTING IN THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND



From "Illustrated London News," courtesy British Bureau of Information

A TURNING MOVEMENT BY THREE BRITISH BATTLE-CRUISERS AND THEIR SCREEN OF DESTROYERS

This drawing was made from data supplied by Petty Officer W. Griffin, Coxswain of H. M. S. *Shark*, a British destroyer which met an heroic end during the battle. Coxswain Griffin was rescued and brought to Hull



From "Illustrated London News," courtesy British Bureau of Information

BRITISH BATTLE CRUISERS ENCOUNTERING THE GERMAN HIGH SEAS FLEET OFF JUTLAND

For the moment the British ships were holding their fire. The misty weather and low visibility across the smooth sea were unfavorable for long-range shooting. To the left are the leading ships of the German High Seas Fleet



© *Western Newspaper Union*

THE SINKING OF THE GERMAN LIGHT CRUISER "NÜRNBERG" OFF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

This drawing, which appeared in a German illustrated paper, is supposed to represent the incident at the moment when the *Nürnberg*, summoned to surrender by the English flagship, replied, "German warships never surrender"



Photograph from London "Daily Mirror"

A NEUTRAL SHIP IN FLAMES IN MID-OCEAN

A German submarine commander showed the customary respect for the property and lives of unoffending neutrals by setting this neutral ship afire



Photograph from London "Daily Mirror"

THE BRITISH SHIP "GLOUCESTER CASTLE," SINKING AFTER BEING TORPEDOED BY A GERMAN SUBMARINE

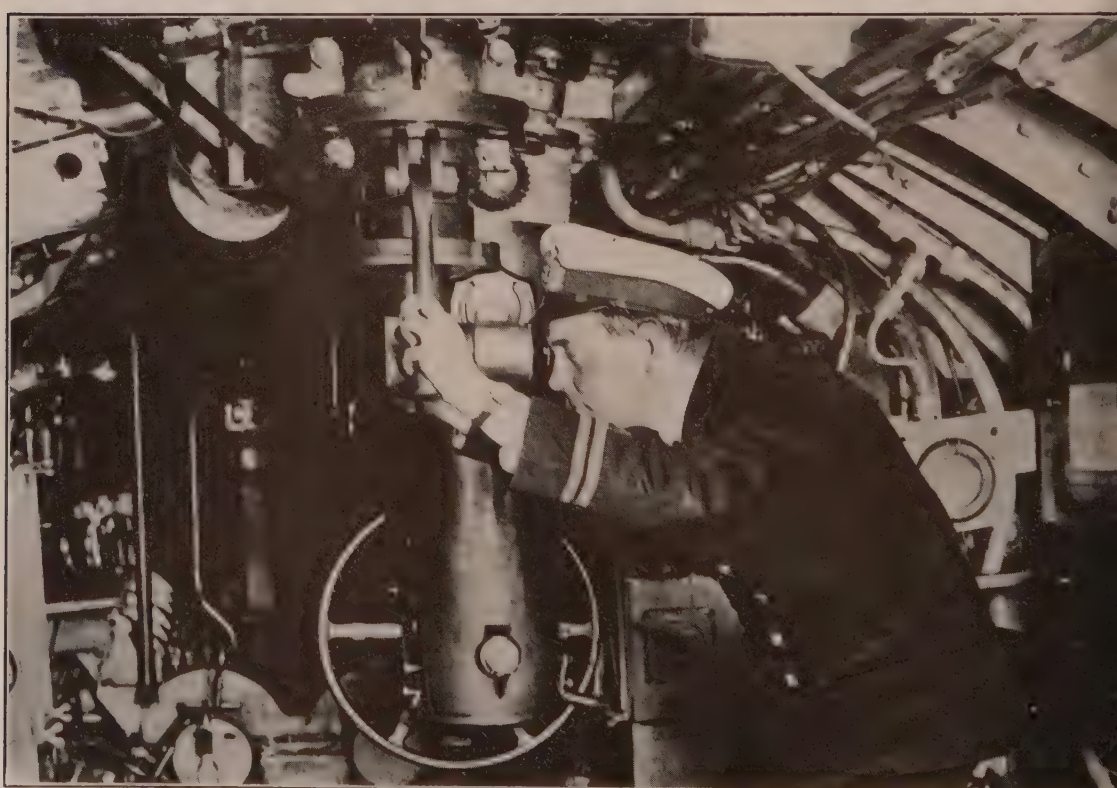
As in a number of similar cases, this vessel, laden with helpless wounded, was sunk without warning



© Western Newspaper Union

WHITE MICE PROTECTING A SUBMARINE

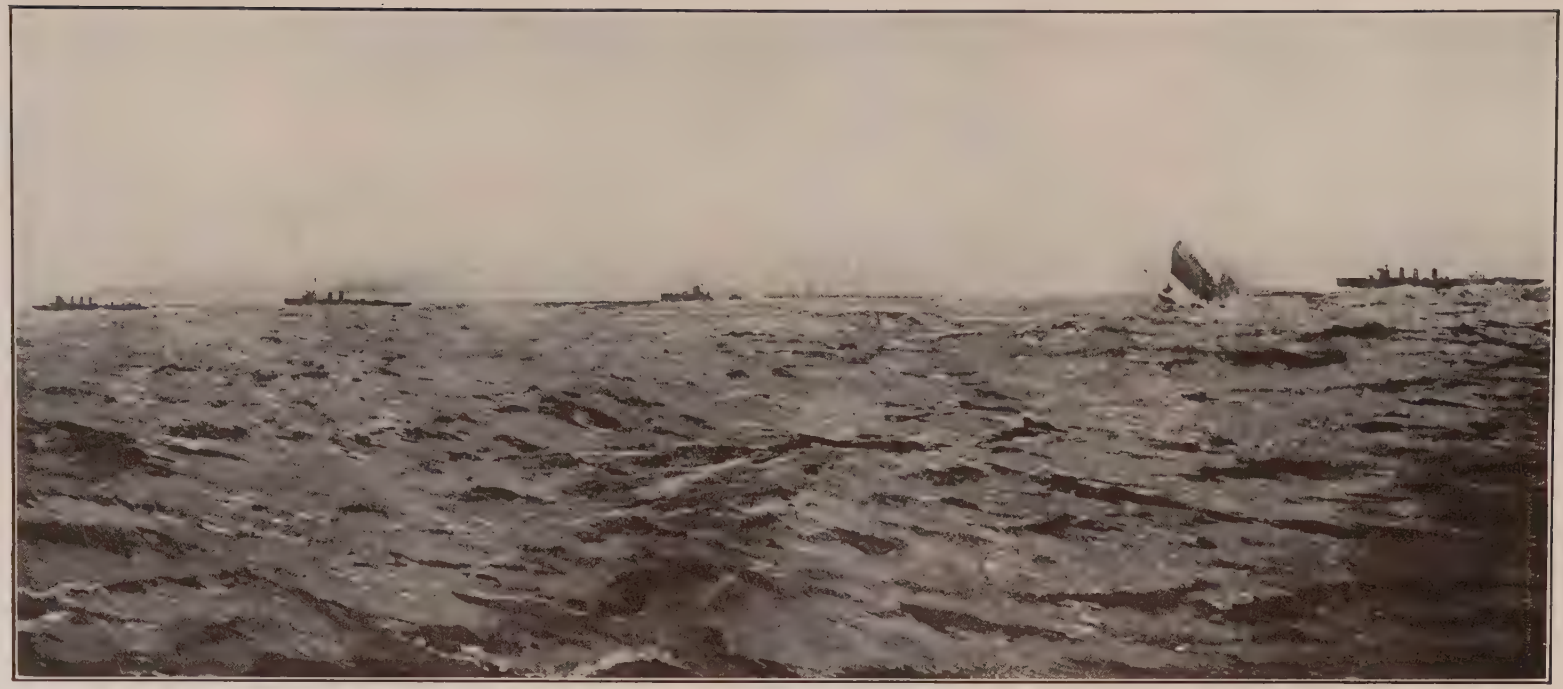
White mice are not noted for their bravery, but they help save the lives of the brave men who man the British submarines. They are the first to smell the fumes of the dreaded "petrol" and give warning by their squeals



Photograph from Central News Photo Service

AN ANXIOUS MOMENT ON A BRITISH SUBMARINE

The commander is watching through the periscope for the approach of a momentarily expected enemy ship



© *London "Daily Mail"*

THE LAST OF A GERMAN CRUISER

The final plunge, stern first, of a German light cruiser sunk by a British salvo in the Battle of Jutland. In the background may be seen British destroyers steaming at full speed after the fleeing German fleet. Some of the British ships exceeded their supposed maximun speed in this battle



A GERMAN SUBMARINE SURRENDERING TO THE AMERICAN SHIP "FANNING" *Photograph by Western Newspaper Union*

The submarine was sometimes caught napping, as was this one. These men were eager to save their lives by surrendering to a chivalrous foe

CHAPTER SIX

THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND

I

"THE DAY" AT LAST

On May 31 there took place in the North Sea and opposite the Danish mainland the first encounter between the British and German battle fleets and the greatest conflict in all marine history. "The Day" which the Kaiser and the German naval officers had toasted and dreamed of, the moment to which the British navy had looked forward for almost two years, became a reality in the Battle of Jutland.

The circumstances of the encounter are simply told. On the preceding day Sir John Jellicoe had put to sea with the British battle fleet and had made a sweep through the North Sea in a broad circle, his armada divided into two fleets; that of the battle cruisers, with certain supporting units, under Sir David Beatty, had turned south and made a round of the broad gulf which is bounded on the east by Denmark and on the south by the flat German coast lying behind Heligoland. Jellicoe had remained to the north and was, in mid-afternoon of May 31, not far from the Norwegian coast at its southernmost point.

The next day Admiral Von Scheer with the German battle fleet had left his base and started northward. He, too, had divided his fleet and sent before him a battle-cruiser squadron under Admiral Von Hipper. As far as Jellicoe was concerned the mission of his fleet was obvious, it was one of the familiar excursions of the British battle fleet, intended to give the fleet a regular airing and to repeat the familiar invitation to the Germans to come out and fight. It was the visible demonstration of naval supremacy, expressed in the proud progress of the greatest fleet in human history through seas which had once borne the name of the German Ocean. As to Scheer's mission, it was—and remains—unknown. It may have been one more of the relatively few and fugitive

ventures of the German fleet, seeking to get its high seas exercise, without any wish or expectation of battle; it may have been a major detail in some larger scheme to break the British blockade and permit fast cruisers to slip through the breach and repeat the exploits of the *Emden* in making war upon merchant ships.

But whatever the mission of Scheer, it is certain that he, like Jellicoe, was engaged in an operation which did not have in its immediate vision a Trafalgar. Scheer had not left his base to challenge British sea supremacy and Jellicoe had not set sail with the purpose or expectation of meeting Scheer. Every circumstance in the engagement indicates that it was a chance encounter on both sides.

The actual meeting took place shortly before three o'clock in the afternoon, when Beatty, his sweep through the North Sea completed, had already swung round and was headed north to rejoin Jellicoe's flag. At this moment one of his light cruisers, *Galatea*, sighted the smoke of Hipper's squadron and a little later a seaplane, sent up from *Engadine*—once the *Campania* of transatlantic memories—reported the proximity of Hipper with five battle cruisers.

What followed was a threefold operation: First, Hipper swinging round immediately on the discovery of Beatty, whose force was overwhelming, sought to draw Beatty after him and back upon the main German battle fleet, which, as he well knew, was coming up behind him. Beatty, on his part, whatever he may have suspected, was ignorant of the fact that Scheer was at hand and was naturally bound to seek to destroy the squadron now within his grasp. We have then the flight of Hipper and the pursuit of Beatty, which constitutes the first phase, lasting from about 3:30 to 5 P. M.

But at five o'clock Beatty suddenly finds himself in the presence of Scheer's battle fleet. He is now hopelessly outnumbered and has no choice but to get away. His purpose becomes what had been the earlier purpose of Hipper. Now it is the British admiral who is seeking to draw the whole German battle fleet—Scheer and Hipper, too—after him and back upon Jellicoe, who has long ago been warned by wireless of the fact that Beatty was engaged, and has been driving

toward the scene with full speed. Hitherto, however, Jellicoe has lost rather than gained distance, because Beatty, in going south after Hipper, has pushed ahead at full speed and thus travelled much faster than Jellicoe's battleships could move, although these were now exceeding their trial-trip records.

The second phase lasts from five o'clock until just before seven, when Scheer and Hipper, in pursuit of Beatty, suddenly run into the British battle fleet, at last come up, and promptly turn and make a desperate effort to escape from an unequal conflict. This flight is the third phase, and in it the battle fleets of the two rivals are at last engaged, but only momentarily.

II. THE FIGHT

On the scientific side the circumstances of this Battle of Jutland must remain of absorbing interest for all technical and naval men; on the tactical side it has already given rise to controversies without end and without hope of solution. On the practical side both nations claimed a victory and neither could, in the immediate limits of the engagement, support its claim save by a complete reliance upon its own official statements and a complete denial of the similar statements of the enemy.

Yet certain things are at once clear. First of all, we have to deal, not with a Salamis or a Trafalgar, but with a locally indecisive engagement—three indecisive engagements, more accurately—in each of which one of the contesting parties was actually in flight from the other; outnumbered and aiming at escape—not at the immediate destruction of the enemy. Hipper ran away from Beatty; Beatty ran away from Scheer when the German commander had joined his lieutenant bringing up the battle fleet; Scheer fled from Jellicoe when the British commander had arrived on the scene.

In each case the fugitive escaped not alone destruction but fatal injury. The German battle fleet was not destroyed, however it may have been crippled. Neither Beatty nor Jellicoe suffered losses which in the smallest degree crippled their battle and cruiser fleets. The losses of the British were heavy, but frankly conceded. How heavy the

German losses were remains to be established after the close of the war, but even on the face of the German admissions, first and last, they were sufficiently considerable to constitute at least as great a proportionate loss, given the relative strength of the two navies.

In the end the German fleet was able to escape by reason of the lateness of the hour when the main battle was joined and the extreme shortness of the vision—the famous "low visibility" of the official reports. The morning of May 31 had been clear, but the afternoon had brought with it mists and pockets of fog. In the third and last phase of the battle Jellicoe had interposed between the Germans and their bases with his overwhelmingly superior armada, and, had he been able to reap the profits of his superior numbers and advantageous position, it is hardly open to question that the result would have been something approximating another Trafalgar.

But low visibility and night robbed Jellicoe of his prize. The German fleet escaped, disappeared in the mists and the shadows of the night, and were not to be found when morning came. Save for a Zeppelin, which sailed over the British fleet and attracted a brief fusillade, no German ship on sea or in the air was to be found on June 1 and in due course of time Jellicoe sailed away to his base in Scotland, put his injured ships under repairs, and was, in a few days, quite ready to resume his customary watch of the North Sea, his strategy and his methods totally unaffected by the recent battle and his fleet retaining that immense and indisputable superiority which it had possessed from the very outset.

And here, in a narrow compass, is the story of the Battle of Jutland, a story complete when the statement of the losses of the two contestants is added. The British losses were immediately announced, and no question has ever been raised, save in obviously ridiculous German claims, as to the accuracy of the British report. As to the German statement, on the contrary, in its first form it was absolutely false, as a German official confession later admitted, asserting that the falsification was for "strategic reasons." As amended it was still far below the estimates of the British officers, who participated in the contest, but understate-

ment as it may have been, it disclosed nothing to warrant the German assertion that there had been a German victory, or any material inroad on comparative British and German numbers.

The losses as stated by the two official statements were as follows:—

BRITISH LOSSES

	TONS		OFFICERS AND MEN
Queen Mary	27,000	Battle Cruiser	1,000
Indefatigable	18,750	" "	790
Invincible	17,250	" "	780
Defence	14,600	Armoured "	850
Black Prince	13,550	" "	750
Warrior	13,550	" "	750
Tipperary	1,430	Destroyer	160
Ardent	935	"	100
Fortune	935	"	100
Shark	935	"	100
Sparrowhawk	935	"	100
Nestor	1,000	"	100
Nomad	1,000	"	100
Turbulent	1,430	"	.....
	113,300		5,680

GERMAN LOSSES

	TONS		OFFICERS AND MEN
Lützow	28,000	Battle Cruiser	1,150
Pommern	13,040	Battleship	736
Wiesbaden	3,450	Light Cruiser	...
Frauenlob	2,657	" "	281
Elbing	3,450	" "	...
Rostock	4,820	" "	373
Five Destroyers	5,303		....
	60,720		2,540

The total casualties officially acknowledged by the British were 6,106; by the Germans, 2,414.

It remains to be said that the official estimate by Sir John Jellicoe of German losses was two dreadnoughts, one *Deutschland*, one battle cruiser, five light cruisers, six torpedo-boat destroyers, and one submarine; in all 119,200 tons, or 6,000 tons more than the British loss, with a correspondingly larger loss in personnel.

Laying aside all technical discussions, it may be remarked that the loss of the three British battle cruisers, including *Queen Mary*, was due to a structural defect promptly recognized and as swiftly remedied. Neither the torpedo boats nor the submarines justified expectations as weapons of offence directed at the capital ships. It was the common testimony of the British officers engaged that the German gunnery was exceedingly good in the opening stages and equally bad as the engagement progressed.

Such criticisms of the tactical aspects of the engagement as have come, largely from American naval authorities, are comprehended in the somewhat conjectural assertion that since Jellicoe at the close of the engagement lay between the Germans and their bases and the hours of darkness in the northern latitudes were so short, the ultimate escape of Scheer is incomprehensible. Aside from this there is a common agreement that the battle developed nothing new or of real importance; that it was fought in accordance with the conventional ideas of the past and left naval tactics about where it found them, save as it greatly depreciated the valuation hitherto placed upon the submarine as a weapon against the larger ships, for it was a matter of official knowledge that the Germans had their submarines out and they accomplished nothing of importance, despite several favourable opportunities.

III. THE RESULT

When the British battle fleet left the scene of the conflict and returned to its base it came home conscious and confident that it had won a great victory. Arrived at home it found the nation in the throes of something not far from a panic arising from the belief that a great naval battle, *the* great naval battle, had been lost. More than this, in neutral countries there was heard the whisper of Ægospotami, of a Modern Athens at last the victim of a new Lysander. Far and wide all over the world went forth the impression that Britain had lost the greatest naval battle in human history.

The cause of this amazing report was to be found in the stupidity of the British Admiralty. The first news of the battle that the world

had presented to it, without explanation or adequate comment by the British Admiralty, was the mournful catalogue of the British ships lost. Thus announced the conflict had the appearance of a disaster, and this appearance was intensified when the Kaiser, seizing the opportunity thus offered, congratulated Scheer and his subordinates upon a victory which had at last broken British sea power. Had Nelson survived Trafalgar, he could not have deserved more sweeping praise than was now showered upon the German admiral.

And to some extent this belief in a German victory long survived, as a consequence of the blunder of the Admiralty. Yet what were the facts? The measure of the victory, if victory there had been for the Germans, was necessarily to be sought in the progress of subsequent events. There the answer was simple. On the morrow of the battle the German ships sought their refuge and presently, through neutral channels, there began to come reports of the true extent of the injuries to German ships. A cordon of silence and of mystery was drawn about these ships, but week followed week and months came and went without any new revelation of German sea-power; the "victorious" fleet continued to hide behind its land defence for more than two years, while the fleet the Kaiser described as "defeated" resumed its regular sweeps through the North Sea. On June 1 and thenceforth the situation was exactly what it had been on May 30; nothing was in the smallest degree changed.

Here was the final answer to the claim that Jutland had been a German victory. Only one result could have warranted the Kaiser claiming victory, and that was the infliction of sufficient injury upon the British fleet to destroy the existing superiority of the foe. Unless this could be done any effort was a failure, and the Battle of Jutland was a patent failure because afterward, as before, British sea supremacy remained unquestioned, revealed in ever-increasing efficiency as weeks and months went on.

After Jutland there was a gradual disappearance of the demands by one school of naval thinkers that, to use Winston Churchill's vigorous phrase, the fleet should "dig the rats out." More and more clearly

it was perceived that Britain had won the war on the seas when the battle fleet moved to its station on August 3. Then it had taken Germany by the throat; thereafter—slowly, surely, more completely than Britain had throttled French commerce in the days of Napoleon—she tightened the noose about Germany. It was not the destruction of the German fleet, but the mastery of it, proven by its very stagnation, and the paralysis of it, which constituted the true naval victory of the war.

Seen in its later perspective, Jutland was an incident; it changed nothing, it modified nothing. It was an accidental encounter, brought on by Beatty, who naturally desired to force an engagement, particularly while he had the advantage of numbers; followed up by Scheer when he, in turn, possessed the advantage; broken off by the German when he met the main British battle fleet. We may now accept without qualification the conviction of the British commander that, but for low visibility and darkness, Jutland might have been a Trafalgar. But even had there been a Trafalgar it would not have changed the situation, for all the consequences of Trafalgar would continue to be seen in the later time, while Jutland would soon be forgotten.

The discovery at the close of the war that Germany had sunk one ship or three ships more than her enemy—that the loss to British tonnage was twice as great as to Germany, as the German official figures would indicate—would be of as little consequence as the assertion, equally familiar, that in the Battle of the Marne the French losses exceeded the German. The proof that France had won the Marne was found not in official reports of either contestant, not in the lyric celebrations by the Kaiser's press agents of the German strategic retreat or equally eloquent Allied descriptions of French and British advance. The solid fact was that the Germans had set out to destroy the military power of France and that after the battle was over, the military power of France endured and continued to endure.

We may leave it to the future to disclose the accuracy or exaggeration of the claims of Jellicoe and his subordinates as to the injury done to the German battle fleet at Jutland. But no such postponement is required to demonstrate that the Kaiser's fantastic declarations immedi-

ately following the battle were without basis in fact. If Jutland was only a drawn battle which left both navies as they were before, it was, even then, in a clearly perceptible measure a German defeat, because the purpose of any attack, of any battle joined by the Germans, must have been to reduce if not to abolish the disparity between the two fleets.

Scheer failed and was celebrated; Jellicoe succeeded and was criticized—did, in fact, in a relatively brief period, give way to Beatty; but if the legend of a German victory continued to survive for a long period and with the less thoughtful, there presently came a clearer and saner view as weeks and months passed and it was perceived that what Germany claimed to have been a victory, breaking the grip which Britain had maintained upon sea supremacy since Trafalgar, had left Jellicoe's fleet in unchallenged control of the exits of the North Sea and had not in a single particular lessened the severity of the blockade, which was more and more closely sealing every sea entrance to the Fatherland.

To compare a great battle with a small one, when the *Merrimac* and the *Monitor* met in our own Civil War, a victory by the *Merrimac* in Hampton Roads would probably have meant the destruction of our blockade and, conceivably, the loss of the war for the North. But when the *Merrimac* put back to Norfolk, crippled, there to remain until she was blown up, the danger was abolished. In a sense, the fight between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* was a drawn battle, far different from the outcome of the struggle between the *Kearsarge* and the *Alabama*, for example. Neither ship was sunk, both sustained crippling injuries, but the only real significance of the contest for the future, so far as the Civil War was concerned, lay in the fact that the most considerable challenge to the supremacy of the North on water had ended without in the smallest degree impairing that supremacy.

So it was in the case of Jutland, the Germans had had their "Day"; and when that day had ended in fog and mist, their fleet had made good its escape, having inflicted heavy losses and having received rude blows. Ships and men had fought well, as British seamen had come to expect German ships and men to fight, but if Jellicoe had failed to de-

stroy Scheer, as Sturdee had annihilated Spee at the Falklands, Scheer had accomplished nothing save his own escape. Jellicoe occupied the field of battle, which was in the larger sense the whole North Sea; he dominated it and his successor continued to dominate it without challenge, until that day more than two years after Jutland when the German fleet again left its base, and sailed for the British coast, there to strike its flag and intern, thus completing the greatest capitulation in naval history.

A little man may strike a big man a sudden blow which gets home and hurts, but if the little man runs away after the blow is delivered, locks himself up in his own home and stays there, he may congratulate himself upon his success in landing his blow but he can hardly claim the mastery of the field from which he has just fled. Nor can he claim a victory, since the big man remains his master. In the case of Jellicoe and Scheer the analogy holds good, it was Jellicoe's fleet which kept the high seas in all the weeks and months of the next two years, and in this fact lies the proof that Jutland was a British victory and a German defeat, a vindication of Britain's claim to sea-supremacy and a failure of that German challenge made by the Kaiser long years before, when he had said: "Our future lies on the sea."

The real challenge to sea power, the real attack upon British marine supremacy, was to come when the submarine warfare was resumed in its more virulent form ten months after Jutland. But this was not a challenge to the battle fleet; it was an attack upon British seaborne commerce, which, had it prevailed, would have rendered the mastery of Jellicoe's battle fleet useless in the larger sense. Britain would have starved, her Allies succumbed to the lack of material and ultimately yielded because British and American reinforcements could not arrive—in 1917 British naval supremacy was challenged—momentarily threatened—but not by the battle fleet.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME—CONDITIONS OF THE CONTEST

I

A SUPREME TRAGEDY

In the first four years of the war on the western front, the great Battle of the Somme—the First Battle of the Somme, as it may now be described, since there was a Second, and even a Third, in the campaign of 1918—constitutes the supreme tragedy. It was alike the graveyard of more men and more hopes than any field of fighting, from Switzerland to the sea, up to the end of July, 1918. The flower of a generation of young British manhood was shrivelled under the fiery blasts of that fearful summer; all that was physically and morally best in British manpower, the first full measure of the magnificent answer of the volunteers to the call to arms, made its great and awful sacrifice between July and November in the hills and valleys between Amiens and Bapaume.

For the British, powerfully aided by the French, the Somme was a victory and a victory in which their effort was by far the greater and their sacrifice several times as heavy as that of their allies, who were paying and had paid their generous share at Verdun and in the first two bloody campaigns which had preceded the Verdun struggle. But although the victory later resulted in the first considerable German retirement on the west front, that of the spring of 1917, and more immediately saved Verdun, all the ground and much of the glory were swept away in five terrible days of March, 1918, when those positions which had cost the British five months of desperate and costly effort were recaptured by the Germans swiftly and cheaply and the battle-line pushed to the environs of Amiens and across the Ancre and the Avre, while the scene of a considerable British victory became the field of the most complete British disaster in more than five centuries of cam-

paigning in France and elsewhere on the Continent of Europe. Four months later the ground was retaken by British armies and the victory expanded beyond the Hindenburg line. Thus the sting of defeat was swiftly removed by the glory of one more triumph at the Somme, but even after the final and complete success of 1918, the sacrifice of 1916 remains a grim and hideous memory.

The supreme tragedy of the First Somme is found not in the later events but in the immediate circumstances of the battle. Not all the splendour of the sacrifice, not all the glory of the spirit revealed by the hundreds of thousands of young men from all corners of the British Isles and from all parts of the British Empire, served to disguise the fact that Britain was paying the full and terrible price for her long years of political and international blindness. The best of the race died or were shattered in what was, after all, a training school and the most costly of all training schools, for the population of a country which had neglected to give to its sons proper preparation in days of peace for the test that was to come with the inevitable war.

Between Mons and the Somme Britain had created a mighty army. Five million Britons had responded to the call of the country with a speed and readiness which establish an enduring record of national devotion. Eight divisions of the old Expeditionary Army had been expanded to eighty; in place of the few field pieces and almost non-existent heavy guns there had been created a supply of heavy artillery far surpassing the German resources on the opposing front, while the old scandals of the preceding year—when Sir John French had vainly clamoured for high explosives—had given way to a time when ammunition of the right sort and without limit was available.

Out of every class of her population, drawing from field and factory, from the far colonies and the most congested of her London districts, Britain had fashioned a citizen army as we, in the United States, had fashioned two armies in the days of the Civil War. But like our armies it was an army in which officers and men were lacking in all of those essentials to victory which are the product of years of preparation and training on the intellectual side. The First Battle of the Somme, so

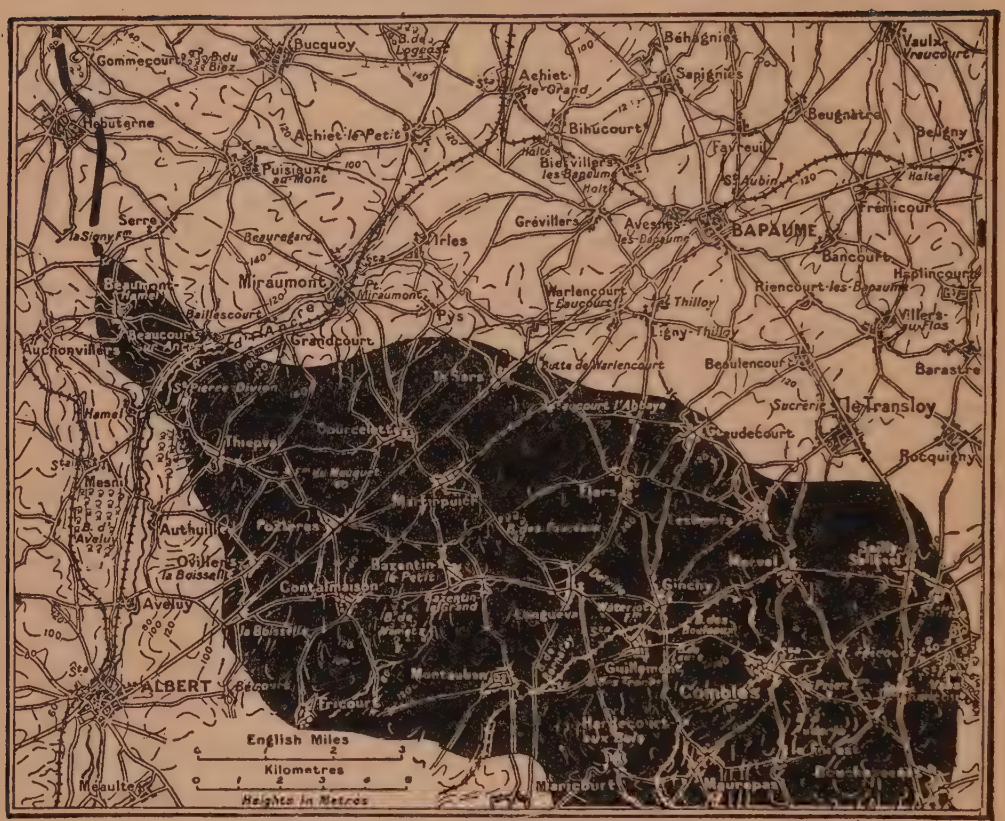
far as it was a battle between the Briton and the German, was a battle between a still unorganized population—driven forward by dauntless courage and an unconquerable spirit of sacrifice—and a machine, commanded and directed by men who for a generation had been studying the method of war and absorbing the lessons of a system bequeathed to them by their predecessors who for a century and a half had been engaged in that industry of war which Napoleon described as the "Chief of Prussian occupations."

In the shock between these two contending forces it was the British who paid the first and most terrible price. Between the shambles of July 1—when more than 50,000 Britons fell (not a few to their own guns) over half the front before the unreached first lines of the German defence—and the November achievement of Beaumont-Hamel, when the British army and its commanders gave first unmistakable evidence of having learned a portion of the great lesson, there stretches a period of tragic sacrifice and incredible waste of the finest in a nation's human resources, which should serve to all who come hereafter as the ultimate demonstration of the cost of unpreparedness and the eternal refutation of all the theories, once so powerfully held alike in Britain and America, that a peaceful nation, strong in its potential resources for war and confident of the determination of its citizens to defend their liberties, can safely await attack before beginning its preparations for defence.

II. THE PURPOSE

The main purpose of Anglo-French strategy at the Somme was unmistakable from the outset. The blow had long been maturing; it had been the most important circumstance in the main plan of the campaign of the year, which called for a general pressure upon the Central Empires from all sides. But its immediate objective was to relieve Verdun and compel the Germans to abandon an attack which was approaching the last ditch of the defenders. Because of the Verdun situation it was undertaken a number of weeks earlier than had originally been planned, but despite the German effort to hasten British action before preparations were even reasonably complete, Haig continued to get ready for,

BRITISH FRONT, JULY 1–NOV. 30, 1916



BLACK SHOWS GROUND GAINED.

and Joffre to postpone, the date of the attack, believing alike that Verdun would hold and that to strike before the preparation had been adequate would be to invite defeat if not disaster.

Had there been no Verdun blow the Somme stroke might have had far greater immediate effect, for many French troops consumed in the Lorraine furnace would have been available in Picardy. So far Verdun served to accomplish what Von Falkenhayn had hoped to see it accomplish, but this was a restricted fraction of its grandiose major objective. On the other hand, as the presence of large French forces at the Somme proved, Verdun had not bled France white, nor deprived Joffre of sufficient reserves to undertake a great offensive after a tremendous defensive operation.

For the rest, the Somme was a contest in attrition. It was a wasting

of the reserves of both sides. As such the Allies accepted it, confident that, after the Verdun sacrifice, and in the face of Russian attack and Austrian weakness—with later demands for German aid made as a result of Rumanian intervention and Balkan operations—Germany could not indefinitely continue to match division with division against her western foes.

That the Allies hoped to achieve an immediate rupture of the German line, a break through on a wide front followed by a German retirement out of France; that they even expected such a result before the attack of July 1, is likely; but after that date, and at a time when the Allied world was still discussing the approach of a German disaster, it is clear that the Allied High Command had already put away all such hopes and consented to continue a war of positions, with all its burden of casualties, in the belief that attrition might accomplish what forced attack had failed to do, namely, compel the Germans to shorten their lines in France or run the risk Lee had run, with such fatal results, when, in the spring of 1865, he had sought to hold too extended a front with his shrunken army.

As an effort to penetrate the German lines, to break through, the Somme offensive was an immediate failure, despite the success of the French, which, had it been more immediately followed up, might have had far-reaching consequences. Henceforth we see the slow, grim, monotonous advance, preceded by artillery preparation and limited to the attainment of relatively restricted objectives. In a word, the First Battle of the Somme was one more episode in the war of positions, of sieges, carried out upon a front of more than thirty miles, but carried forward at a pace so slow as to abolish all chance of penetrating the vast network of German defences organized in depth and capable of extension, behind, as rapidly as the enemy could break its front works.

In this siege-battle, which lasted for nearly five months, more than three million men fought and the killed, wounded, and captured numbered at least one million. When it was over the British had pushed forward some six or seven miles on a front of a dozen; the French had made a similar gain on a somewhat wider front. The Germans had lost

the high ground which was the foundation of their defence system, and their whole salient in France between the Scarpe and the Aisne was endangered, but their dike had held sufficiently long and well to satisfy German purposes. While still assured of their western defences the Germans had crushed Rumania, beaten down the Russian offensive, and retained and even extended their eastern conquests.

And this was the larger purpose of German strategy. With the failure at Verdun, to snatch a decision in the west and eliminate France before the British were ready, they lost the initiative in France and Belgium, lost it for a period of months, lost it until Ludendorff on March 21, 1918, won his amazing success and returned to the old Somme battlefield a victor. Thus, while the First Somme was a local success for the Allies—a success for their strategy, since it saved Verdun and regained the initiative; a battlefield success, since it resulted in the temporary gain of considerable valuable ground in Picardy—it was not a defeat of material consequence to the Germans. Even as a contest in attrition its results were not important, because the later collapse of Russia enabled Germany to bring her eastern forces to the west and regain numerical superiority.

In all senses, save one, therefore, the First Somme represents a bitter and a brutal disappointment to the Allies. The courage, the devotion, of the young British troops in this terrible ordeal will remain as enduring a page in Anglo-Saxon history as Verdun supplies in the annals of the French race. Nations describe their glory differently: for the French Verdun was an "epic"; for the British, a battle which cost them twice as dearly was a "Show"; but for both peoples the story of the campaign of 1916 is forever memorable. Apart from the human qualities there revealed, however, the Somme represented the substantial failure of the first great Allied offensive—the first effort of Britain, at last organized for war upon the continental scale.

Had Russia held out, the First Somme might have proved a decisive contribution to German defeat in the following year. While Russia remained, its consequences were disclosed in the Hindenburg retreat from the Somme to the Scheldt. But, Russia gone; the campaign of 1917



Photograph from Underwood & Underwood

A BRITISH SHIP AT THE DARDANELLES AS SEEN FROM A BALLOON

The British use specially equipped ships such as this from which balloons may make ascensions for observing the enemy's positions. The ascensions are made from the deck between the bridge and bow



© Western Newspaper Union

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE GERMAN DESTROYER "S-126" BY THE ENGLISH SUBMARINE "E-9"



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

A SMOKE SCREEN AT SEA

British destroyers have thrown out this smoke screen to protect some troop ships which they are convoying. This was the first picture illustrating this protective operation to be passed by the British censor



Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

A GERMAN SHELL WHICH HIT NOTHING EXCEPT THE OCEAN

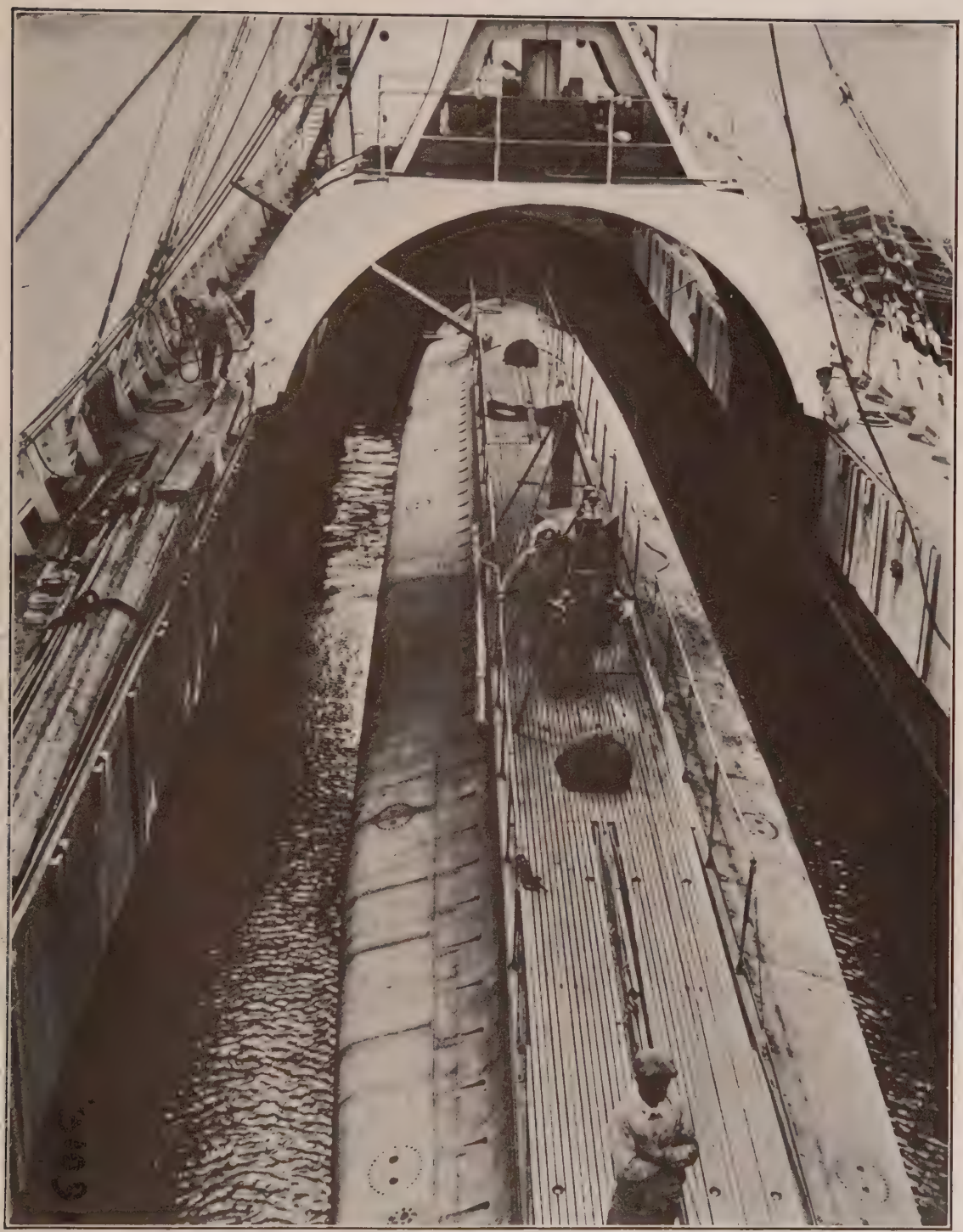
This bursting German shell, fired from many miles inland, landed harmlessly between this British torpedo-boat and the transport she was convoying



Courtesy British Bureau of Information. © *"The Illustrated London News," Drawn by Maurice Randall from material supplied by the "Shark" Coxswain.*

THE "SHARK" FIRING HER LAST TORPEDO IN THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND

The story of how this British destroyer's commander, Loftus Jones, with one of his legs shot away, took charge personally of the last gun left in commission and kept firing until his ship went under, the waves is one of the epics of the Battle of Jutland.



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

A NEW KIND OF MOTHER AND CHILD

This is *Le Kanguroo*, a French submarine mother ship. She carries her submarine charge between her pontoon sides. This particular submarine mother ship was torpedoed and sunk in the Bay of Funchal, Madeira Islands



Photograph from London "Daily Mirror"

IN THIS CASE THE GERMANS DID NOT SUCCEED IN "SINKING WITHOUT A TRACE"

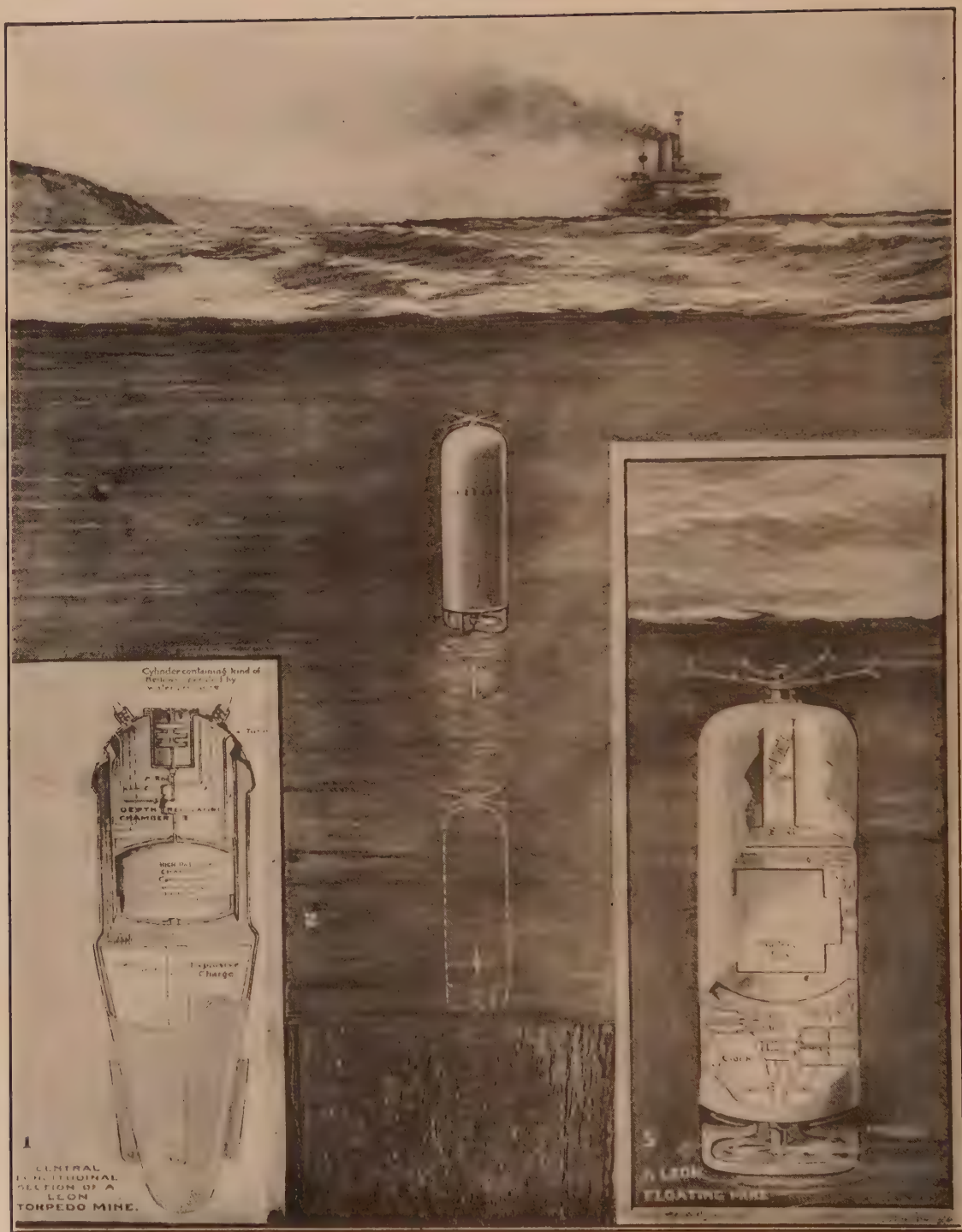
British destroyers are hurrying to the rescue of the surviving victims of this submarine atrocity



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

AN ITALIAN MINE-LAYER DROPPING MINES WHILE UNDER FULL HEADWAY

The Italian Navy is noted for its efficiency in everything to do with torpedoes, submarines, and mines. The mines are ranged along the sides of the vessel ready to be dropped overboard at carefully charted points



© Western Newspaper Union

A FLOATING MINE

The internal mechanism of this dreaded modern instrument of destruction

a failure, as an immediate consequence; the return of the Germans to Bapaume and Péronne; their arrival in Albert and Montdidier, held by the Allies from 1914 onward, changed the whole perspective of the world as to the struggle of 1916 and added new sadness to the story of the sacrifice of the untold thousands of British soldiers who had died in all the shell-torn and wasted regions between the Somme and the Ancre on either side of the Albert-Bapaume road, along which they had marched to victory and to death and near which they later slept for many months within the lines of a foe who had retaken the positions for which they had paid so high a price in the summer of 1916.

III. THE NOYON SALIENT

In its local aspect the Anglo-French offensive which precipitated the First Battle of the Somme was an effort to reduce the famous Noyon salient and to reduce it by an attack—not at its apex, south of Noyon, where the German line was but fifty miles from Paris, but by an attack upon one side of this salient, not far from the point where it rejoined the straight line of the general German front between Arras and the still more famous Ypres salient to the north in Belgium.

This Noyon salient was the creation of the fighting of the weeks immediately following the German retreat from the Marne. Von Kluck and Von Bülow had retreated from the Marne to the heights north of the Aisne between Soissons and Berry-au-Bac and the high ground north of Rheims, on which stood the old, dismantled forts anciently constructed to defend the cathedral city. While the German High Command was still attempting to return to the offensive east of the Oise and toward the Marne, Joffre had opened his turning movement west of the Oise, the Germans had been compelled to conform to French strategy, and the line had mounted steadily from the Oise below to the sea at Nieuport, eastward of Rheims, Arras, and Ypres, and westward of Lille, Cambrai, and St. Quentin.

The front from the Oise to the sea was thus created by the hazards of the fighting, and when the campaign was over the Germans held a broad salient pushed out toward Paris, with its nose at Noyon. The

base of this salient was the line between Arras and Berry-au-Bac, an air line distance of some eighty miles, while the extreme depth was some forty miles between St. Quentin and Noyon. Such a salient presented no difficulties to the defender. It was too broad to be exposed to the immediate dangers of the Ypres salient, and between Noyon and Berry-au-Bac, on its south side, it rested upon the St. Gobain Forest and the Chemin des Dames Plateau, positions which were reckoned almost impregnable and did, as the event proved, suffice to arrest a tremendous French offensive in 1917 with disastrous consequences alike to the French commander, Nivelle, and, temporarily, to the morale of the French nation, shaken by the tremendous costs of the Aisne attack.

Within the salient were many railroad lines, both trunk and lateral, enabling the German to transport his troops rapidly from one point to another as emergency demanded, while Douai, Cambrai, and St. Quentin served as bases for concentration alike of men and material. The French railroad systems in this corner of the country were admirably adapted to German purposes, while those on the Allied side of the front were far less satisfactory; in consequence, the German enjoyed, throughout the conflict, the advantage that superiority in communications provided. This was, too, a priceless advantage for an army fighting on the defensive and outnumbered by its foe.

The strategy of the Allies, whose armies were commanded by Haig and Foch, was comprehended in a drive eastward astride the Somme, designed to break in the western side of the salient, move across the flank and rear of the considerable concentrations in the nose of the salient nearest Paris, and compel an immediate or an eventual evacuation of this nose to avoid envelopment as the Allied advance approached and reached the railroads serving the Germans in these sectors. Could the Allies, as a result of their first push, break the German line on the front attacked and, by a rapid and unimpeded advance, reach the line of Cambrai-St. Quentin, they might achieve a Sedan by enveloping the Germans to the south of them. Had their success been as great or as immediate as that of Hindenburg on the same front nearly two years later, this result would have followed.

But while they thought of such a grandiose immediate success, Allied commanders did not reckon upon it; their calculation was, rather, that by their first attack they would break through to Bapaume and Péronne and secure the crossings of the Upper Somme and, from the ground thus gained, continue their advance by the slower process of siege warfare until they reached the point where a wide swinging German retreat would be necessary. In this they anticipated the strategy of Hindenburg and Ludendorff, two years later, with the single but all-comprehending difference that what they hoped for the Germans achieved. Even more exactly they anticipated the strategy of Foch in August, 1918, when using the British army as his weapon he compelled the Germans to retire from Albert to the environs of Cambrai in one brief month.

Failing all these things, Foch and Haig purposed to take such advantage as they could of any less considerable immediate success and begin a long campaign of siege and attrition, designed to wear out German man-power and slowly acquire eastward gains which, by the close of the campaign, would make the German position south of St. Quentin and west of the Oise, on the front nearest Paris, precarious and even perilous. This last they accomplished.

The simplest description of the long Battle of the Somme is that it was, after the first attack upon a wide front, a slow, costly wearing through of the western side of the Noyon salient, which in the end partially closed the entrance to the Noyon pocket, between Arras and the Oise, and so compelled the Germans deliberately but unavoidably to retire to the afterward-famous Hindenburg line, in the spring of 1917. There never was a chance, after the first moments of the battle, that the German line would be broken on a wide front or that there would be a swift advance to St. Quentin and Cambrai, the ultimate objectives, or even to Bapaume and Péronne, the local goals.

The choice of the Picardy front for the offensive was doubtless determined by the obvious profit promised from any considerable advance and perhaps by the fact that on this front the British and French lines now met and both armies could participate, while making use of their

own systems of communication. Finally, as the event proved, success, even if only after slow and desperate struggling, would compel the enemy to retire from the point nearest to Paris and thus give better insurance against some later German return to the offensive and a new dash for the French capital. The value of this phase of the Allied purpose was revealed two years later when the German success in Picardy carried the enemy back to and beyond their old line and again placed Paris in danger.

But these larger considerations were promptly lost sight of when the First Battle of the Somme opened and minor villages and inconsiderable strips of forest became the prizes of contests which rivalled Waterloo or Gettysburg in numbers engaged and losses incurred, while advances of a mile represented the fruits of weeks of preparation. In the aggregate the Allies advanced at the rate of little more than a mile a month, and each mile gained represented hardly less than 200,000 casualties. All preceding standards of artillery fighting were distanced; all earlier records in casualties, in the whole history of modern warfare, were exceeded. Beside the First Somme the Champagne offensive was inconsiderable and Loos but a demonstration in force. The first week of the fighting cost the British more in killed, wounded, and captured than the total number they had engaged at Mons or at the Marne.

IV. THE BATTLE-GROUND

The country over which was fought the First Battle of the Somme has no counterpart in the United States, but is quite like certain English districts. It is a chalk country cut by two considerable streams and many smaller brooks, running in deep valleys. The two larger streams, the Ancre and the Somme, the latter alone deserves the name of river, flow through relatively wide stretches of bottom lands easily transformed into almost impassable marshes.

Actually the Germans north of the Somme and on the whole operative front held the western slopes of a series of ridges which behind them rose slowly to the divide between the waters flowing into the Somme and those which wind northward into the Scarpe and Scheldt.

In its first stages the British advance was northward and eastward up and over these slopes and the culminating point between the Ancre and the Somme—known as "the Ridge"—was the key of the battle in its early phase.

As you travel eastward out of Amiens along the great national highway to Cambrai, which is itself a survival of Roman road planning, you pass slowly and imperceptibly from a country of the plain, first to a region of long, rolling hills and finally to the fairly deep-cut valley of the Ancre, which crosses the national highway at Albert and finds its way to the Somme a few miles east of Amiens. In our own West or South we should call this river a creek and it is at all times an inconsiderable stream.

East of Albert the national highway climbs rapidly into a tangle of hills and finally passes the crest of the ridge above Pozières, a notable centre of fighting in the battle, and begins to descend toward Bapaume on the other side of the divide. This national highway was the main route of communication and the chief objective of the fighting. Along it the British sought to advance to Bapaume and toward Cambrai, and the battlefield of the British phase of the Somme lies on either side of the road for some twelve miles on the north side and rather less than eight to the south. The extreme points of the July fighting are Gommecourt to the north beyond the Ancre and Maricourt to the south, just north of the Somme valley, where the French and the British lines met.

From Gommecourt to Maricourt the German line ran in a series of curves on the forward slopes of the various hills about a number of villages henceforth memorable as the scene of desperate fighting. These villages were, from north to south, Gommecourt, Serre, Beaumont-Hamel, St. Pierre Divion—where the lines crossed the Ancre—Thiepval, Ovilliers—just south of which it crossed the national highway—Fricourt, and Mametz. Maricourt was just inside the Allied line. Between Gommecourt and Fricourt the general direction of the line was north and south, but from Fricourt it ran directly east to Maricourt, whence it again turned south.

On this front there had been no fighting since October, 1914, and in

BRITISH FRONT, JUNE 30–JULY 3, 1916



BLACK SHOWS GAIN

that long period German industry had transformed the German lines into fortresses of unexampled strength. On the map the network of trenches seems inextricable and the experiences of the Champagne fighting had led the enemy to construct in the chalk deep dugouts on a scale unknown before. Electric lights, running water, and all the furnishings stolen from occupied French towns, contributed to the comfort of the garrisons of these strongholds.

Every advantage of elevation and contour was with the German. To the natural advantages he had added defences of the most formidable character; the villages were transformed into fortresses of great resisting power; the woods were wired and fortified, and along the line a number of more elaborate works or redoubts added to the defensibility of the positions. Finally, behind this first line, the strongest single

stretch of line on the western front, the German had constructed a complete second line along the crest of the ridge above Pozières, and had begun to prepare still a third line beyond the ridge and on the last stretch of rising ground in front of Bapaume, which was eight miles northeast of the point where the national highway crossed the firing line.

North of the Ancre the country is more open and rolling than to the south, and this gave the enemy wider outlooks and made Serre and Gommecourt obstacles which proved beyond the resources of the British to take by direct assault. South of the river the hills are more abrupt, although none is 600 feet above the river bottom. Seen at close range, however, these latter hills appear to be far more considerable than the map would indicate and constitute military obstacles of very great value.

South of the Somme and on the French front the German defences were far less elaborate, as the German, quite incorrectly, had not calculated upon any serious French attack, while he had long before the battle learned where the British were to strike. But behind his defence system southwest of Péronne he had the deep and almost impassable valley of the Somme, coming north from Nesle, before it makes its great bend west below Péronne, and this served to hold up permanently all French advance eastward after the first surprising rush of July 1. Even in its first phase, too, the French operation was relatively minor; it was designed to cover the flank of the British operation, which was to be the decisive thrust.

After the first onslaught the British front was narrowed to the region south and east of the Ancre on either side of the national highway, but in the main east of it, between Ovilliers and Maricourt, as Sir Douglas Haig sought by thrusting first northward and then eastward to widen the breach made in the German first line east of the road and turn the Germans out of their impregnable positions from Thiepval to Gommecourt. Actually, therefore, in its earlier and more deadly period, the Somme fighting took place between the Albert-Bapaume stretch of the national highway and the Albert-Péronne road, which passes through Maricourt.

North of the Ancre, although the British made progress in November and took Beaumont-Hamel, the Germans held Gommecourt and Serre to the end, while south of the Somme the French, after their first success, made small progress for several months and eventually took over a portion of the front north of the Somme to cover the extended flank of Haig as he continued his forward movement toward Bapaume, designed to turn the Germans out of their positions on either bank of the Ancre. This movement ultimately succeeded in attaining this object, although the retirement did not come until the onset of the campaign of 1917 and was then without more than temporary profit.

In this area in which the battle was fought there were no towns of importance which were the prize of battle, no railroad lines or junctions of strategic importance; from first to last the struggle was for villages, woodlands, and elevations, all of no more than local value. One line taken, the Germans were always able to retire to a new and formidable secondary system of defence.

The meaning of the struggle is hard to explain by the map and the day-to-day fluctuations are obscure and intricate, because the battle itself was a competition in attrition on a narrow front rather than a pursuit of remoter and more considerable objectives to be attained by success on the front as it existed at any given moment. It was a bruising, brutal combat; it had little of the old-fashioned and ever-fascinating circumstances of a war of movement. It was a war of machines; men only fought when the artillery had achieved approximate annihilation in the enemy's lines. It ended in November barely six miles in advance of the old British front line of July 1; while it lasted its fame filled the world, but when it had passed it left no record to rival that of Ypres or Verdun.

Generations hence men will doubtless go to Verdun and to Ypres, attracted by the memories of the tragic splendour of the contests which raged about those ruined cities, but at the Somme not only was a smiling region turned to desert, to a desert which will endure for many decades, but the last semblance of romance and of charm was eliminated from war and it became nothing but murder on a scale hitherto unparalleled in civilized or barbarian warfare.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE SOMME—JULY 1

I

THE NEW ARMY

In the phrase of the British army—which, faithful to the tradition of the race, conceals its emotions, like its achievements, in words which by their very inappropriateness arrest attention—the Battle of the Somme was "the first full-dress show" of the New British Army. It was such a test as our own civilian armies of the Civil War period had in 1862, in the Peninsula and at Antietam, but unfortunately for the British they did not, as did our armies, North and South, face opponents equally new to the conditions and trials of modern war.

The Old British Army, the men of Mons and of Ypres, had for the most part disappeared from the line and a majority slept their final sleep in the old "Wipers salient" which they had held by such incredible gallantry and at such terrible costs alike to themselves and to the picked troops of the Kaiser. The German gas attack of April, 1915, the barren sacrifices of Neuve Chapelle and of Loos, had completed the work of destruction, and the army which faced the Germans on the Somme was, in larger part, an army composed of men—and, for that matter, of officers of the lower ranks—who two years before had been without the smallest knowledge of military affairs and without even the latent suspicion that they might ever wear khaki or undertake the task of a soldier.

No such army as the British, which opened the Battle of the Somme, had appeared on the Continent for a century; even the levies of the Third French Republic, in its despairing effort to save the country in 1871, had included a considerable fraction of citizens who had served with the colours. But from top to bottom the British army, apart from a few officers of the highest rank, was a new thing. Its commander-

in-chief had begun the war as a corps commander and where he now directed the operations of a million men, he had then exercised control of rather less than forty thousand.

Sir Henry Rawlinson, who commanded the army actually engaged, had landed in Belgium in October, 1914, at the head of the immortal Seventh Division, which entered the Ypres Campaign 12,000 strong and left it three weeks later 2,500 strong.

Major General Allenby, who, to the north, commanded one corps which had something of an independent rôle, had been a cavalry colonel when the war broke, and, in the defence of Messines and "Whitesheet" ridges, had taken the first step in a career which was to grow with the Somme struggle, to achieve new laurels in the victorious offensive against Vimy Ridge and the Arras front in 1917, and finally to culminate—at least for the first four years of the struggle—in the capture of Jerusalem and the subsequent destruction of the Turkish army in Palestine in the spring and autumn of 1918.

Another rising officer, under whose immediate command some of the most considerable successes of the opening phase were achieved, was Major General Horne, commander of the Fifteenth Corps on July 1, but later commander of the First British Army and the defender of Bethune in the terrible days of April, 1918. Later in the conflict, the Somme forces were reorganized and General Rawlinson, with the Fourth Army, was aided by a Fifth British Army under Major General Sir Hubert Gough, whose services at the Somme seemed for a moment to mark him as one of the coming men, but the promise was not fulfilled and he disappeared from France on the morrow of his terrible defeat in the Battle of Picardy, on March 21, 1918.

The old story of the Civil War is thus being repeated in this new British army; new names are appearing, old faces are vanishing, a new organization is being formed in the terrible testing fire of a great battle. By no means all the reputations made at the Somme were retained in later campaigns, but after a fashion, the men who rise to prominence in this conflict are the men who, in the next two years, are to direct British campaigns. And to the number of these must be

added Major General Sir William Robertson, Chief of Staff and, with Kitchener, the chief maker and moulder of the New Army.

Since the days of Oliver Cromwell no similar British army had taken the field. It represented the hope, the patriotism, the physical and moral pick of more than forty millions of people of the British Isles; and Canada and Australia, as well as New Zealand, were represented alike in effort and in achievement in the terrible days that were to follow. After nearly two years the British race had responded to the challenge of the German upon the battlefield. It had taken two years to bring together this army, two years of bitter disappointment and endless humiliation, but, on July 1, Britain was at last to answer "present" in the roll call of peoples fighting Germany.

II. HOPES AND FEARS

But what was to be expected of this army? German military authorities affected, and even seemed, to hold it in utter contempt. If on the physical and the moral side it was as fine an army as ever marched to death with cheers on the lips of its countless thousands, it was still, on the professional and the scientific sides, an experiment—and an untried experiment. Experience under fire the various units had known, in the trench training of recent months, but experience of only the most limited sort.

The army which opened the Somme fighting was more than twice as large, three times as great, in fact, as the force Sir John French had commanded at Mons or at the Marne. Artillery, heavy artillery, there was at last in profusion, and ammunition beyond the dreams of the keenest of gunners, but the men who worked the guns were but recently come from civil life. All the machinery of war, which Germany alone possessed in adequate amount when the war came, was at last provided for the British, thanks alike to the miracles of their own workshops and the complementary contributions of America, but could this machinery, could that army—which was itself a new machine, in the hands of inexperienced masters—face the German machine, with its ante-bellum perfection and its two years of war experience?

This was the great problem which faced the British soldier, statesman, and public on the eve of the Somme; and to it no man could return an answer. All that could be done to create and equip an army in less than two years had been done. Alike the response of the British people and the achievement of British industry in the making of this army will remain a landmark for future generations of the race. Yet, for the commanders of the army, great in numbers and in material resources but weak in all that the trained soldier reckons essential, the anxiety must have equalled that of the few experienced fighters who sent the Minute Men and militia of our Revolutionary period against the regiments of "Redcoats," whose flags bore the record of victories all over the world and whose officers had seen fighting in every clime and against the best that Continental warfare could afford.

It is certain that neither the army nor the British public felt any doubt. After long months in the trenches—outnumbered, outgunned, and outmunitioned—the relatively few veterans who were the stiffening of the New Army felt that the bad time was over—that, at last, they had the advantage of numbers, of artillery; that their guns, instead of being rigidly rationed, were able to fire as they chose, while it was the German, now, who gave evidence of growing difficulties alike in manpower and in munitions.

Yet, looking backward to that time of high hopes and only hidden fears, it is necessary to recognize that, of the hopes, many now seem vain. All that courage and devotion could accomplish this New British Army achieved. It died on July 1 as few armies have ever died. In the succeeding weeks, slowly, at a bitter cost, it learned the lessons of war, which can only be learned on the battlefield; it learned the use and mastery of its instruments. But it did not rival, and, in the two years that have followed it has not rivalled, the technical attainment of the German army and of the German High Command.

The real costs of the Somme were long concealed from the public; the visible and considerable progress on large-scale maps aroused the general conviction—first, in the British public and then, at last, in the army—that it had become a machine superior to the German and, a

year later, it entered the campaign of 1917, convinced that it was, to use the "Tommy's" phrase, "top dog." But after bloody failures on the Yser, the defeats of Picardy and of Flanders in 1918 demonstrated again the eternal truth that armies cannot be improvised, even by the richest and most patriotic of peoples—that neither devotion nor the possession of magnificent mechanical resources can avail to enable a nation to overtake an enemy prepared over long years, its staff trained not alone by years of patient and persistent effort, but inheriting a tradition built upon the victorious experience of more than a century.

In a sense the Somme was as tragic an episode as Balaclava and the sacrifice of Haig's magnificent army comparable with that of the Light Brigade. It was not an utter failure; in a sense it was not a failure at all; nor was it unnecessary. On the contrary, the need was imperative, but it was a waste, tragic beyond power of words to describe.

III. THE SAME OLD PROBLEM

On the technical side the Battle of the Somme was one more effort to solve the same old problem of transforming a war of positions into a war of movement. There had been many previous experiments, all of them failures on the western front, although the Germans had succeeded brilliantly in Galicia in their Dunajec struggle of the preceding year.

Neuve Chapelle, Second Ypres, Champagne, and the still more recent Verdun offensive, yet proceeding furiously, were all efforts to solve the same riddle. Champagne, the most ambitious Allied effort, had failed because the German organization in depth had enabled the Germans to hang on until their reserves arrived, defending second- and even third-line systems, still beyond the reach of effective artillery fire, for France had not yet overtaken Germany in the provision of heavy guns.

Verdun, the great German experiment, after coming far nearer to success, had failed to make an immediate break through chiefly because the attack had been upon too narrow a front and the French—on the flanks of what was, up to that time, the greatest immediate advance of

trench warfare—had been able to hold up the victorious German centre after it had reached the Douaumont Plateau and swept away all the lines of French fixed defence before it and, in addition, seized most of the remaining gun positions on the east bank of the Meuse.

Neuve Chapelle and Loos had failed because of bad staff work after initial success. In all four the element of surprise had played a considerable part, and the experience of the Somme was presently to demonstrate that, without surprise, victory was impossible. But in the Somme campaign the British deliberately laid aside the element of surprise, influenced alike by the Verdun episode, in which surprise had not brought success, and by the enormous task of preparing for the preliminary artillery bombardment, which was relied upon to sweep away the intricate mass of German defences.

We have nearly two years more to cover before at last the Germans solve this problem of penetration and bring to the western front methods which had been devised in the east, by the application of the lessons of Byng's surprise in the Second Battle of Cambrai, methods which resulted in prompt and deep penetration and seemed for the moment to revolutionize the whole war. Yet even these methods failed to restore the old-fashioned war of movement save between positions. At the Somme the emphasis was laid upon artillery preparation, as it had been by the Germans at Verdun and by the French in Champagne.

Unfortunately for the British their artillery was by no means up to its task in the opening phase of the battle. It did not achieve a destruction of the Germans first line comparable with that which had been achieved by French guns, mainly of smaller calibre, in Champagne a year earlier, and by German heavy artillery in the last days of February of the current year. And without the element of surprise and lacking in adequate artillery preparation, the British infantry, launched against the German positions—lined with machine guns brought up from deep dugouts—when the British guns "lifted" for the infantry advance, went not merely to defeat but to annihilation.

In the later phases the British artillery slowly but surely mastered its problem. Before the struggle terminated the balance between the

gun and the fort had been changed and the Germans were driven to abandon their elaborate system of fixed defences for a far different method which rested upon the principle of organization in depth and lightly, rather than upon that principle expressed in their Somme defences which rivalled the fortresses of old-fashioned warfare. After the first fatal attempt to sweep the Germans out of their lines by long-continued artillery preparation, rising to an avalanche of steel and fire in the final hours, the British on their side changed their method to one of slow pounding, concentrating their efforts upon local objectives and gradually reaching the point where they inflicted upon the enemy appalling losses, isolated his front lines from his rear, hampered his communications, and thus contributed to the demoralization of his troops.

In the later phase the dugout became a tomb; the infantry in assault reached the enemy trench before the Germans could emerge from underground, if, indeed, the entrance to the dugout had not been blocked and the occupants buried alive,the whole elaborate system of fixed defences was breached and broken, and the Germans were defending their new line from shallow trenches, from shell holes, and from isolated nests of machine guns, exactly as the French had successfully defended Verdun, after their first lines had given way in the storm of February 26.

On July 1, however, the opening attack was one conforming to the older standards, on a front of twenty miles so far as the British were concerned and rather less than half as much by their French allies on the right flank. It did not differ from the Champagne or the Verdun offensive save that the artillery preparation was more intense, the number of guns employed greater, the duration of the bombardment longer; but, unhappily, the effectiveness of the fire infinitely less than on either of the former occasions.

As a result the British were on this occasion to fail as the French subsequently failed at the Aisne in May of the next year, and as the British again failed in Flanders a few months later in the same year. One more effort to break the deadlock, which had existed on the west

front since the end of the Marne-Ypres campaign, was foredoomed to failure.

IV. JULY 1

The army of General Rawlinson consisted of five army corps containing a varying number of divisions, while associated with it was a sixth corps under Allenby. All told, the British strength was something like twenty divisions containing around 250,000 bayonets. To the south of Maricourt the French coöperating army was under the command of General Fayolle, henceforth one of the coming men of the French army, while to the south of this was still another army under Micheler, which played a considerable part in the latter phases of the struggle. Two years later and in the same Picardy fields Fayolle was to intervene at the crucial moment, when the Fifth British Army had been destroyed and save Amiens, bar the road to Paris, and close the gap between the British and the French, thus parrying the latest and deadliest German offensive.

Both French armies were under the supreme direction of General Foch, next to Joffre the most famous of French commanders and destined in later time to assume the command of all the Allied armies at a moment of great peril. In all the trying period of the Yser and Ypres struggle Foch had been associated with Sir John French and again in the campaign of 1915 these British and French generals had closely cooperated, as Haig and Foch did again in the new contest. Fayolle's army, which shared in the July fighting, contained three corps, two of which—the famous Twentieth (the Iron Corps, which had recently saved Verdun and at an earlier time preserved Nancy) and the Colonial Corps—were reckoned as the best of the French shock troops. All told, the British and French forces exceeded 400,000 and were able to put more than 300,000 infantry into the opening assault.

The German force facing the Anglo-French line included portions of two armies, one commanded by Otto von Below, hitherto known for achievements in eastern fighting, and the other by Rupprecht, Crown Prince of Bavaria. But as the struggle proceeded the various German

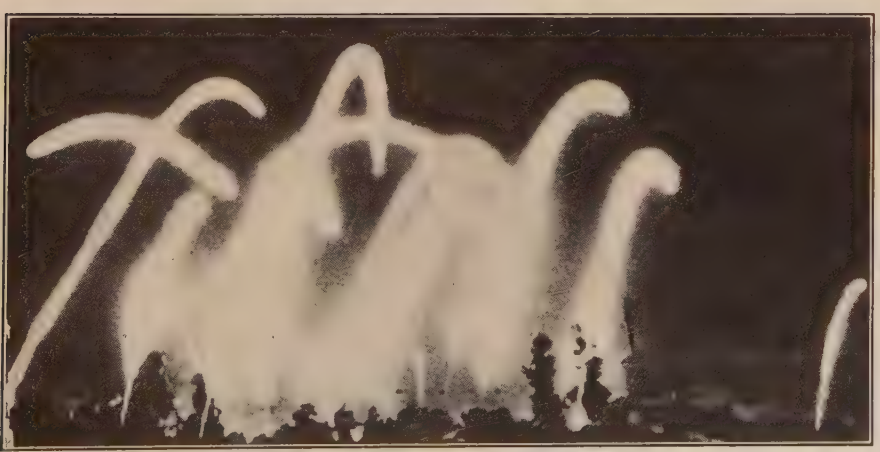
THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

GENERAL SIR DOUGLAS HAIG, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE BRITISH ARMIES ON THE WESTERN FRONT

At the desperate moment in the Battle of Ypres when the decimated British front line was being held against apparently hopeless odds by cooks, hostlers, drivers, and any one who could carry a gun, General Haig, immaculately dressed and accompanied by a small escort of his staff officers, rode along his lines exposed to the full fury of the enemy fire. He was as calm and cool as if on dress parade at home in England. The moral effect upon his hard-pressed troops was magical. It seemed to galvanize them into invincibility



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

STAR ROCKETS ON THE SOMME FRONT AT NIGHT



© Committee on Public Information

THE CURTAINS OF THE WAR ZONE

Miles upon miles of curtained roads like this one stretched throughout the war zone. Note the apertures cut in the drops to admit shafts of light



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

A GERMAN INCENDIARY BARRAGE AT NIGHT

The German incendiary projectiles added still another horror to war and have been responsible for the wanton destruction of much property in Northern France. The barbed-wire entanglements in front of the French trenches are seen in the foreground of this picture



THE "IMPREGNABLE" HINDENBURG LINE

Photographed by French Pictorial Service

These fortifications, in the invincibility of which the Germans had placed their confidence, yielded to the first onrush of the French at the Somme

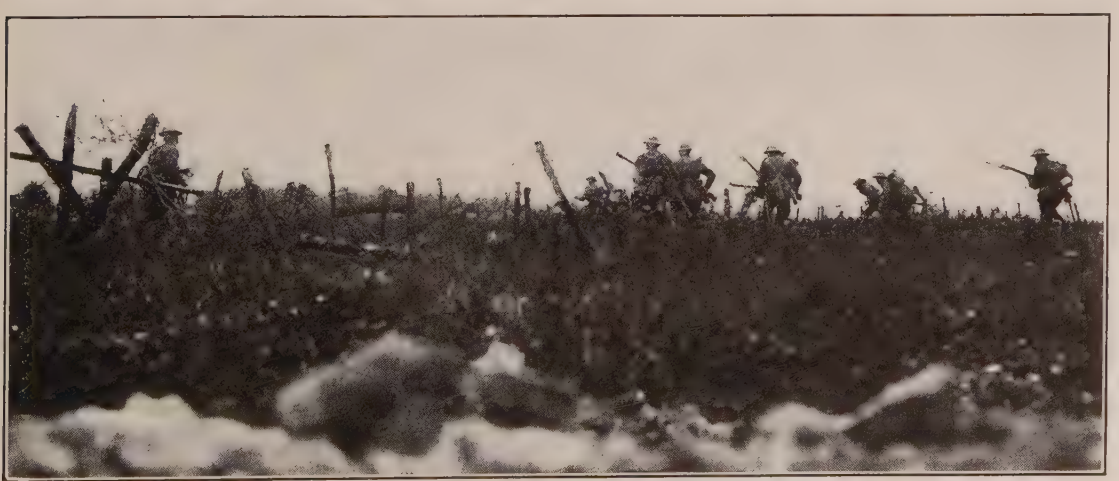


Courtesy Major A. Radclyffe Dugmore

BRITISH TROOPS ASSAULTING
This assault was made January 7, 1916, at Boiselle

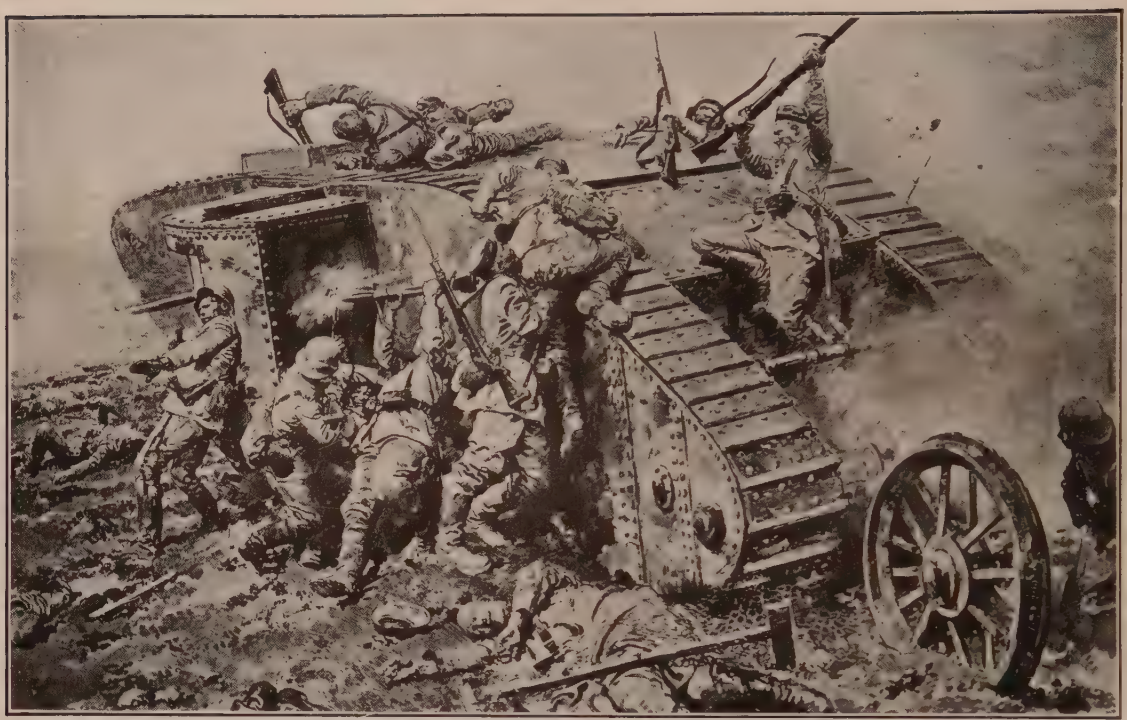


WIRE ENTANGLEMENTS IN FRONT OF HINDENBURG LINE



Courtesy Major A. Radclyffe Dugmore

ONE OF THE WILTS REGIMENTS CROSSING SHELL-SWEPT GROUND



Drawn by F. Martania for "The Sphere," London, copyrighted by The New York Herald Co.

GERMAN ATTACK ON A BRITISH TANK



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

CANADIANS FIGHTING AT COURCELLETTE ON THE SOMME



British Official

THE GREAT BRITISH ADVANCE IN THE WEST

A raiding party getting clear of a sap and racing toward the Boche trenches



Photograph by Press Illustrating Co.

SOMME FRONT AT BOUCHAVESNES

A dangerous passage between two trench sections. These men are targets for sharpshooters



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT

This is what the great guns do to France's beautiful countryside



Photograph by Underwood & Underwood

GERMAN TRENCHES DESTROYED BY ALLIED ARTILLERY

What the British troops found in the crumbling remains of the enemy's trenches after a terrific bombardment

forces engaged were placed under the supreme command of Rupprecht, and the contest was actually between Haig and Foch on the Allied side and the Crown Prince of Bavaria on the German side. It is well to point out, too, that as the battle progressed new divisions were constantly sent into the furnace from all parts of the front by both sides. Thus in the course of the struggle the Germans employed not less than 133 divisions, although there were probably never more than fifteen or twenty on the line at a given moment, and the Allies used forces only a little less considerable.

At daylight on July 1, after the fiercest final artillery bombardment of the war, the British troops left their trenches on the twenty-mile front from before Gommecourt to Maricourt and advanced against the German lines in successive waves. The great hour for which the New Army and the nation alike had been waiting had come at last. With a heroism beyond praise the assailing waves went forward against defences of known strength whose condition after the long bombardment remained a matter of conjecture.

If the British expected to find the German works destroyed and the German army shaken by the bombardment, they were promptly undeceived. From Gommecourt, through Serre and Thiepval, on either side of the Ancre, and as far south as Fricourt, where the line turned eastward, the advance culminated in swift disaster. On this whole front the German works were still undestroyed; the German machine guns were brought out of the dugouts and opened before the infantry could arrive; in certain instances the infantry passed the first German line only to be taken in the rear by the fire of German troops who had remained concealed underground until the first wave had passed. German barrages prohibited the advance of supporting waves. In all military history there had never been a more prompt or bloody check than that which the British suffered from Gommecourt almost to Fricourt. Even where local gains had been made, the successful troops could not be supported and remained to die or dribbled back in pitiful fragments.

From Fricourt to Maricourt, and for a short distance north of

Fricourt and south of the national highways on the contrary, there had been a measure of success. South and east of Fricourt the German first line had been broken on a front of perhaps four miles and the villages of Mametz and Montauban taken. Owing to the turn in the German line about Fricourt, the fall of Montauban and of Mametz together with the gain north of the town necessitated the retirement of the Germans out of Fricourt and as far westward as La Boissele just south of the Albert-Bapaume stretch of the Amiens-Cambrai national highway. Thus, on July 2, when the German readjustment had taken place, the British were in possession of some seven miles of the old German front line. They had taken 3,500 prisoners and a certain number of machine guns and material.

As for the French army to the south of Maricourt astride the Somme, meeting with far less resistance and operating in conjunction with an artillery trained by long months of war, it had swept forward, attaining all of its objectives with insignificant losses, capturing half a dozen villages and 6,000 prisoners. The Germans had not expected an attack from the French, exhausted as they believed the French army to be as a result of Verdun; for Fayolle's rush they had not made the same preparations which had been so fatal to the British on most of the front; but with all due allowances for these circumstances it is no less clear that greater French success at infinitely smaller cost than to the British was due in part to the fact that a veteran army fought under the Tricolour.

The cost to the British of the first day of the Somme has been variously appraised but by no credible estimate has it been placed at below 50,000 killed, wounded, and captured. It was probably materially greater, and many brigades and divisions were well-nigh destroyed. The dead lay in rows before the unbroken German lines as grain under the scythe of the reaper. The experience of Burnside at Fredericksburg had been repeated in the case of all the British troops north of the Albert-Bapaume road, and the positions which were attacked continued to cover their garrisons for long weeks thereafter. Nor were they ever successfully assailed by frontal attack.

Contrasted with all previous general offensives on the western front the first day of the Somme was a ghastly failure, despite the gain of a mile or two on a seven-mile front before the British and a somewhat deeper penetration by the French. In only one respect had the Allies established immediate and unquestioned superiority: they had seized control of the air and they were to retain it throughout the long months of battle. This success in the end proved of priceless value and was one of the decisive factors in the later advances. But on July 1 it was of less immediate importance, because the German defence had held over so large a fraction of the front.

V. HAIG MAKES GRANT'S DECISION

On July 2 Haig was called upon to make the decision which is expressed in Grant's memorable words: "I intend to fight it out on this line, if it takes all summer." His effort to pierce the German lines and compel a general retirement had been an absolute failure. His attempt to break through even to the relatively near centre of Bapaume had come to nothing; the sum of all his profits was disclosed in the seven-mile break east of the national highway and west of Maricourt.

There was, moreover, no possibility of renewing the general attack; the failure had been too complete, the cost too terrible, to permit the commander-in-chief to think of asking more sacrifices from the shattered divisions and corps which had left their best on the slopes before Thiepval and Gommecourt. Like Grant's army after Cold Harbor, Haig's troops could do no more. On the whole, the prospect on the second day was infinitely less promising than on the day following Neuve Chapelle or Loos; the gain, by comparison, insignificant.

It was, however, impossible to abandon the action altogether, since Verdun remained in peril and the necessity of compelling the Germans under pressure in Picardy to abandon their effort in Lorraine was patent. The major thrust had failed and could not be repeated, there was left only the possibility of making use of the meagre gains which had been acquired along the Somme to compel the Germans, by ever-increasing pounding, to relax their efforts along the Meuse. And this was the

decision of Haig. In the days that followed he slowly and methodically mopped up the fragments of the broken German line before him and blasted his way forward to the second line, behind the broken front. He had failed to break the German line from Gommecourt to the Bapaume road, but, having taken that portion of the first defence system east and south of the road and profiting by the curve in the line, he undertook to advance northward behind the unbroken sectors, seeking to reach the crest of the Pozières Ridge from the south instead of from the west, blasting his way from wood to wood and from ruined village to ruined village, reckoning that, as the army moved northward, it would more and more envelop the German line from Gommecourt to the Bapaume road and slowly compel the Germans to retire from the positions before which his frontal attack had been broken.

And with this decision, made on July 2 and disclosed in all the subsequent fighting, the character of the Battle of the Somme changes. Attacks upon a considerable front there were on later occasions, notably on July 14, but never on such an extent of front as had been assailed on July 1, and never with the smallest hope of achieving any break through or anything but purely local advantage. Haig's method henceforth was a process of erosion, and as the British flood slowly ate its way northward behind the still-unbroken sectors of the German front, these positions had to be evacuated and the gap in the German defence system gradually widened until it reached and passed the west bank of the Ancre.

Throughout this period the French armies served as the flank guard. From time to time, as the British moved northward, Foch attacked eastward and widened the area in which the British might operate. The French attacks were invariably more brilliant and more successful than those of the British, but they were subordinate to the British operation. In all ways the British was the main effort and the British paid the greater part of the expense in life and in material. Slowly, painfully slowly, this British wave ate its way northward; we had day after day the story of the struggle over some insignificant wood or farmhouse; five months of fighting were concentrated in little more than

fifty square miles of territory, and casualties greater than those of our own Civil War were inflicted in an area smaller than that of the old City of New York.

Out of the first failure Haig constructed a battlefield success by iron resolution and by the reliance upon those qualities which have always stood British armies in good stead, whether attacking or holding on. But on the evening of July 1 he faced a failure which might well have staggered a less resolute spirit. The British public hailed that first day as a victory, little knowing the cost or the truth; the German High Command reckoned it a victory, as it was, but built upon it the assurance that the Verdun campaign would continue and the army of the Crown Prince suffer no weakening by the transfer of guns and troops to Picardy; but in this it was mistaken. The first moment of the Somme was, for the British, by far the worst.

To use a simple figure, the first break in the German dike had been inconsiderable—was promptly closed from behind—but in the months that followed the water ate slowly through the retaining walls, and swirled behind one shelter after another of still unbroken dikes, eventually penetrated through all of the old systems of dikes, and, as the campaign closed because of the coming of bad weather, was beginning to surpass the powers of the defenders to construct new dikes behind each falling wall. This, after all, was the real Somme success, a success of erosion and of attrition, wearing away both the walls and the numbers, never achieving a decisive success, never developing into anything which could rival the Marne or even Verdun in popular appeal or spectacular circumstance. But always the British flood wore its way onward and upward until the Germans were out of the whole of their original lines of defence from the Ancre to the Somme and the British looked downward from the summit of the Ridge upon their enemies in the lower ground beyond. Verdun, in the meantime, lapsed into a quiet sector, to become active again only when Mangin took the offensive in October and again in December.

The Somme is not less a symbol than Verdun or the Marne, but as it is the expression of a different race, it has a quality all its own. It

left its seal upon the British people, it expressed the British people, and yet it is—on the military side, as a spectacle and as a campaign—quite indescribable, because it was, from the first days onward, a confused and tangled battle for insignificant objects. It contrasted with the Marne, or even with Verdun, as a battle in the open and in line contrasts with a house-to-house advance through a resisting city. The world could see the Verdun fight unroll before its eyes and could understand, if not the local circumstances, the larger issue. "They shall not pass" summed it up and at the same time translated it for millions. The Somme was untranslatable, once it fell to the level of a siege, with no city or fort as the objective but merely a system of successive trench lines stretching backward, for all that the world knew, to the Meuse or even to the Rhine.

All this was an inevitable consequence of the defeat of July 1 and the subsequent decision of Haig to follow the example and apply the words of Grant. Literally and persistently through the summer and autumn he fought his fight on a line which, save on the largest-scale map, must seem the same unchanged and unchanging front from July to November.

CHAPTER NINE

THE SOMME—JULY TO NOVEMBER

I

TO THE CREST OF THE RIDGE

The Battle of the Somme, following the July 1 attack, naturally and logically divides itself into four phases, as Sir Douglas Haig himself indicated in his terse and soldierly narrative of the conflict contained in an official report which is by all odds the best account of the struggle so far written. These four phases are, in turn, associated with the successive German lines which were broken in the respective periods.

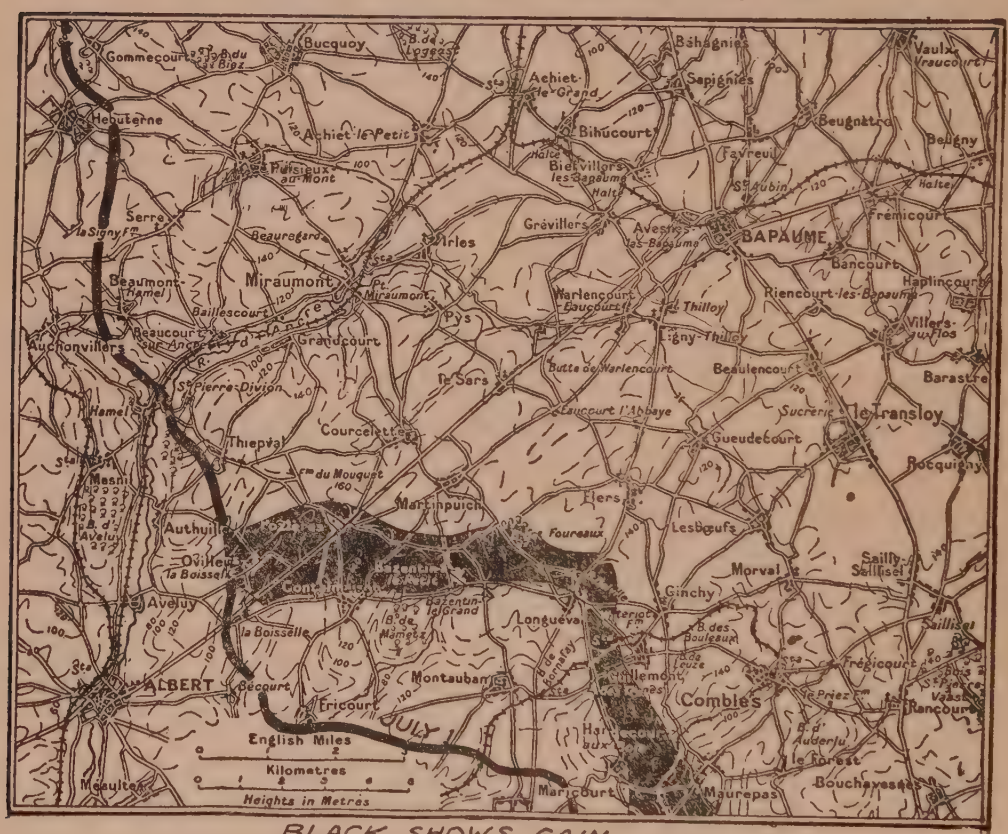
On July 1 the British broke the first line on a front of some six miles east of Fricourt and for rather more than a mile west of it. From July 1 to July 13 Haig was occupied in clearing the way to the second German line, which lay along the forward crest of the henceforth famous Ridge and was indicated on the map by a road running roughly east and west from the Albert-Bapaume national highway at Pozières, through Bazentin-le-Petit and Bazentin-le-Grand to Longueval and thence of Ginchy, touching the notorious Delville or "Devil's Wood" between the last-named towns.

Before he could attack this second line Haig was compelled to fight for nearly two weeks in the restricted area between the original German front line and the new positions. His operations were little more than considerable clearing movements. A number of bits of woodland familiar in the official reports of the time—Bailiff Wood, Mametz Wood, Bernafay Wood, and Trones Wood—outer bastions of the German second line, had to be reduced. Fricourt was taken on July 2, but Contalmaison held out for many days and not until it was taken could the second line be attacked.

On July 14 Haig swung forward on a front from the Bapaume highway near La Boissele straight eastward to Delville Wood and on this

eight-mile front, on the average about two miles north of the front attacked in the July 1 operation, delivered the second considerable blow. This time he was successful on an even more limited front, breaking the German second line only on a three-mile front between Bazentin-le-Petit and Longueval. This offensive marked the beginning of the second stage in the Battle of the Somme.

BRITISH FRONT, JULY 14–AUGUST 18, 1916



More than a month, from July 14 to August 18, was now occupied in clearing the way for an attack upon the third German line and those portions of the second line which had not been carried in the July 14 offensive and the succeeding operations. In this period the field of operations extended westward across the Bapaume road toward the Ancre. The northward push was gradually weakening the German

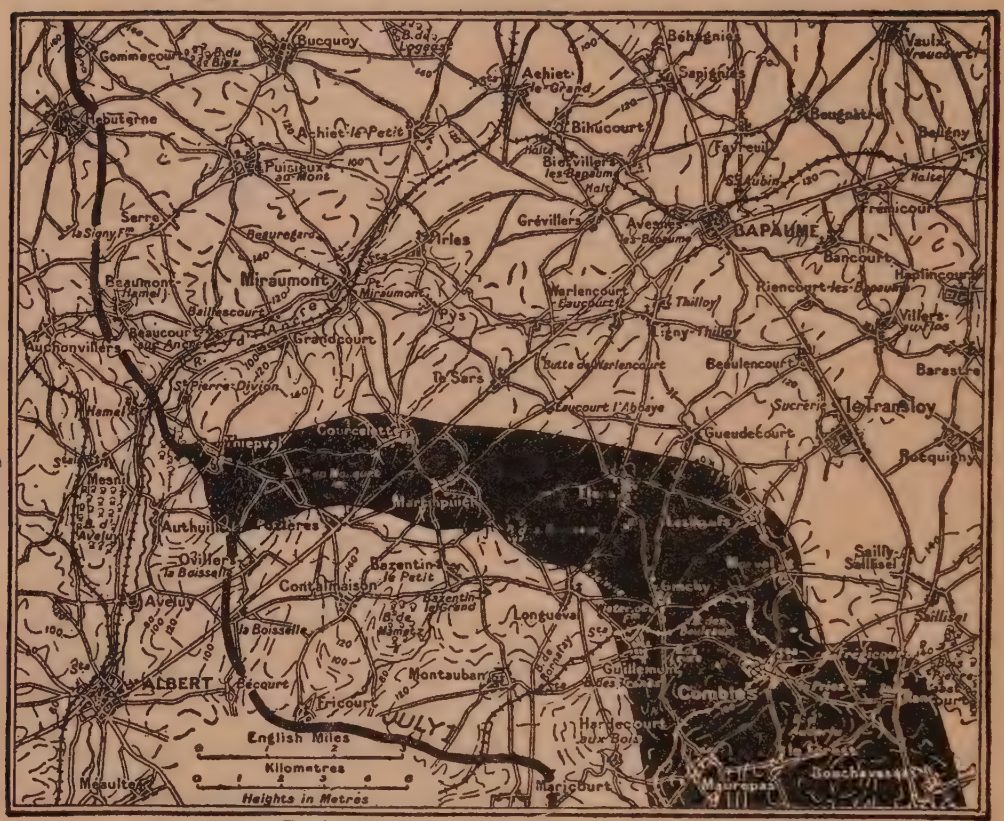
positions between the Ancre and the highway, threatening their rear, and compelling a withdrawal which extended the width of the breach in the first line.

In this second phase Ovillers-la-Boiselle, Pozières, and a material fraction of the Delville Wood were taken and the British at last reached the crest of the famous ridge, near the Pozières Windmill, and began to catch glimpses of the lower lands beyond. But holding the Thiepval salient, the Mouquet Farm, and the village of Martinspuich, as well as Flers on the Bapaume-Maricourt road, the Germans were still in possession of most of the high ground. Seven weeks after the first attack the British advance had not exceeded five miles at any point and the operative front had narrowed to less than seven miles, the distance from Thiepval to Flers.

The French on their part of the front had been far more successful. In the first days of July they had driven a wedge through three German lines south of the Somme and reached the river, within a mile of Péronne; a score of villages and 12,000 prisoners had been their bag in the first phase. In the second, moreover, they had extended their successes north of the river and carried their front forward within striking distance of Combles, the single considerable town within the fighting area. But the mission of the French was relatively minor; they held the flank of the real operative force and their successes, still more considerable than the British for several months, were not turned to larger account, as later commentators have believed that they might have been.

Between August 18 and September 10 Sir Douglas Haig, with French help, undertook to widen his field of operations by pushing east, and in successive attacks succeeded in approaching close to the Bapaume-Péronne highway. Powerfully assisted by the French, he extended his lines until they ran from the edge of Combles southward to the Somme at Cléry, and the German position in Péronne began to be uncomfortable in the extreme. This was the situation at the close of the second phase in the early days of September, and by this time the German had lost his second line from Thiepval all the way round to Estrees south of the river and on the Roman road which runs from Amiens

BRITISH FRONT, AUGUST 18–OCTOBER 1, 1916



BLACK SHOWS GAIN

eastward to St. Quentin. This was the road along which Hindenburg's victorious army was to make its tremendous advance less than two years later and the French army in the summer of 1916 occupied the ground on which was also to be fought the Third Battle of the Somme in August, 1918.

II. THE END OF THE BATTLE.

The third phase of the Somme covers the period from the first days of September to the first day of October. In this time the British at last master the final line of permanent German entrenchments, as these entrenchments existed when the battle began; they take Thiepval and Martinspuich, as well as Courcelette, and begin to get rapidly forward toward Bapaume on the northern slopes of the ridge, while the

Germans are now condemned to fight in the low ground of the headwaters of the Ancre Brook.

Farther to the east the British at last dispose of Delville Wood, take Flers, and approach within less than three miles of Bapaume along the Maricourt road, while still farther to the east the French and British together take Combles, and the French cross the Péronne-Bapaume highway on a front from Rancourt to Bouchavesnes and approach Mont St. Quentin, the key to Péronne itself. In this time there is a manifest weakening of the German resistance. All the old permanent defence systems have been breached and broken on the front from the Ancre east of Hamel to the Somme just north of Péronne and southward of Cléry; on the river the French have made rapid progress all the way down to Chaulnes, where Micheler's French army is beginning to become active on Fayolle's flank.

On October 1 Haig could hope, and did hope, that he was now at the point where his long battle might begin to yield great profits. His process of erosion had worn through the major obstacles which had been before him at the beginning. The Germans were now fighting in hastily constructed trenches, barricaded villages, and in many cases in shell holes and mine craters. They were in the low ground and, since their air service was hopelessly inferior, this was a terrible handicap. There remained, in an ordinary season, at least four more weeks in which to press home the victory.

But again, as happened once more in the following autumn and had happened on many previous occasions, the weather favoured the German. A period of rain and storm winds, of low visibility and heavy communications, intervened. The cumbrous machine, which had at last begun to pound its way forward irresistibly, if slowly, was conquered by mud at the moment when its triumph over the German seemed inevitable. The time when the exploitation of the real successes already achieved might have been possible, passed; the end of the campaign came and the German line was still unbroken; it had been bent, a wedge had been driven in between the Oise and the Scarpe, the original German defences had been pounded to dust, but a line still held.

One final flash of shining achievement there was to lighten the gloom naturally accompanying the great disappointment. On November 14 came a brilliant offensive at the bend of the Ancre and on the west bank of the little stream, about Beaumont-Hamel and near Serre, the scene of the bloodiest repulses of July 1. In a few hours Beaumont-Hamel was taken, the Germans turned out of a valuable joint in their line and a position of great importance in the defence of their front on both sides of the river. Five thousand prisoners and not a few guns, the largest bag of any day in British fighting on the western front up to that moment, were taken.

But Beaumont-Hamel was more than a brilliant incident, it was an evidence of the fashion in which the New Army had learned its trade. It was a thoroughly scientific performance; not so perfect as Plumer's victory at Messines Ridge in the following June, not so immediately fruitful of prisoners and guns captured as Rawlinson's push a little to the south beyond Albert in August, 1918, but it was a workmanlike military operation. There was not again the terrible death list, the sacrifice of countless lives against unbroken wire and unshaken defences. From the end of the First Battle of Ypres to the beginning of the Battle of Arras, Beaumont-Hamel is the most interesting military performance —on the technical side—of the British army, marked by good staff work, sound artillery coördination with infantry, a proof positive that the British army had learned the offensive lessons of modern war.

III. THE TANKS

Before passing to a summary of the actual situation at the end of the Battle of the Somme, one detail demands notice. In the operations of September 15 there first appeared upon the field that henceforth familiar engine known to the British as "Tank" and to the French as "chariot of assault." With the "Poison Gas" of Second Ypres, the tank shares the dubious honour of being one of two great innovations in all of the first four years of the struggle.

The submarine and the aëroplane—and the Zeppelin, as well—were in existence before August 1, 1914. It is true that, both in the case of

the aëroplane and of the submarine, particularly in the case of the former, the developments, after the war began, so completely transformed and expanded their usefulness that they might be regarded almost as discoveries of the conflict itself. But poison gas and the tank were born after the conflict began and were two natural developments of the form of warfare which, in the larger sense, had been a surprise to all combatants when it arrived and remained.

The tank was an odd combination of the familiar chariot of ancient warfare and the modern battleship; in theory it was as old as the warfare of that period where mythology and history meet; in mechanism it was as modern as the latest agricultural machine of the American Middle West. It was a movable fort; it was capable of breaking through the barbed-wire entanglements, of smashing houses, of breaking walls. It could move, waddling like an obese and clumsy hippopotamus, over the strongest lines of defence and opening gaps in the most solid entrenchments through which infantry could pour.

On its first appearance it contributed to the capture of certain ruined villages which had defied all previous artillery preparation. It produced consternation in the ranks of the enemy, but almost as striking was the sensation of amusement created within British lines. Even in the heat of battle thousands of men fighting for their lives and under deadly fire were seized with uncontrollable laughter as they saw these strange and animal-like engines moving forward over the battle-front, carrying death and destruction before them and about them, but combining a high degree of mechanical efficiency in destruction with a clumsiness of movement which was beyond description.

Like the poison gas at Ypres, the tank at Courcelette and afterward did not win the battle in the larger sense. The element of surprise was promptly exhausted, the Germans learned to mass field guns in the front lines and in other ways to meet the tank attack, while the prompt arrival of bad weather, with mud and inundation, limited the immediate usefulness of the tank, although it played an interesting and useful rôle in the remaining weeks of the battle.

Yet, limited as was its success at the moment and in the next few

months, the tank, once it had come, remained, like the various forms of poison gas, a permanent detail in the new order of warfare. A little more than a year later a massed fleet of tanks enabled the British to achieve, at Cambrai, the first real break-through on a considerable front of the whole western struggle. Unhappily the victory far surpassed the expectation and there were lacking reserves to exploit the success, but the success itself opened the eyes of the British and the French to the possible future use of the tanks, while it turned the German mind toward experiments in restoring the element of surprise in the war by intense artillery preparation over a short period.

The Germans tried their adaptation of the lessons of the tank with great success in the first half of the summer of 1918; the British and French—sticking to the tank but changing its form and improving its mechanism—were able to win their first great western victory of this later year and change the whole current of events in Rawlinson's offensive south of the Somme and less than ten miles from the point at which the tank made its initial appearance in the great Foch counter thrust of August, 1918.

Thus, in a future not greatly distant, the tank revolutionized the Allied method of attack; it supplied the place of the long artillery preparation, once regarded as essential to remove the enemy's wire and fixed defences, but fatal to all possibility of surprise. It contributed mainly to two victories, those of the Second Marne and the Third Somme in the critical hours of the campaign of 1918 and it may be regarded, hereafter, as having been as important an innovation in land warfare as were the *Merrimac* and the *Monitor*, in our own Civil War, in naval warfare.

But if the tank could be traced on the military side as far back as the Scythian chariot and the Trojan horse; if it was the natural and logical extension of an idea expressed by the Ancient World in its relatively restricted armoury, the actual origin of the tank was both humble and destitute of martial circumstance, for the original tanks, which ground and crunched their way over the last few rods of the Albert Ridge, were but very slightly modified forms of the Holt Tractor, manu-

factured in Peoria, Illinois, propelled on the caterpillar principle, and intended for agricultural purposes and for the crossing of rough ground and the familiar obstacles of the farmer. Of old it had been the fashion to quote the adage as to beating the swords into ploughshares, but in the topsyturvydom of the new era, the farm tractor was transformed into a land battleship.

IV. THE ACHIEVEMENT

Like the First Battle of Ypres, the First Battle of the Somme did not end abruptly; it simply died out, as both armies little by little surrendered to the elements and sat down in the mud and filth of the bleak Picardy uplands to face another winter. But by December it was plain that the end of the battle had come and there was a prompt effort on both sides to measure its meaning and to translate it into such terms as should satisfy a public looking with frank dismay at the "butcher's bill" and perceiving, on the map, only minor changes as compared with the situation of July 1.

In the period of five months of more or less steady fighting the Allies had advanced at points rather more than seven miles; they had retaken perhaps two hundred square miles of French territory and captured more than 80,000 German prisoners. They had inflicted a loss of at least half a million upon the Germans, but the British alone had suffered even more heavily while the total Anglo-French loss could hardly have been less than three quarters of a million. The enemy's defences had been battered into ruins and his theory of elaborate and grandiose fixed defences had been upset, unfortunately only with the result that the German was to appear in the next year with an elastic system which was to prove equally difficult and equally successful in defying effective penetration.

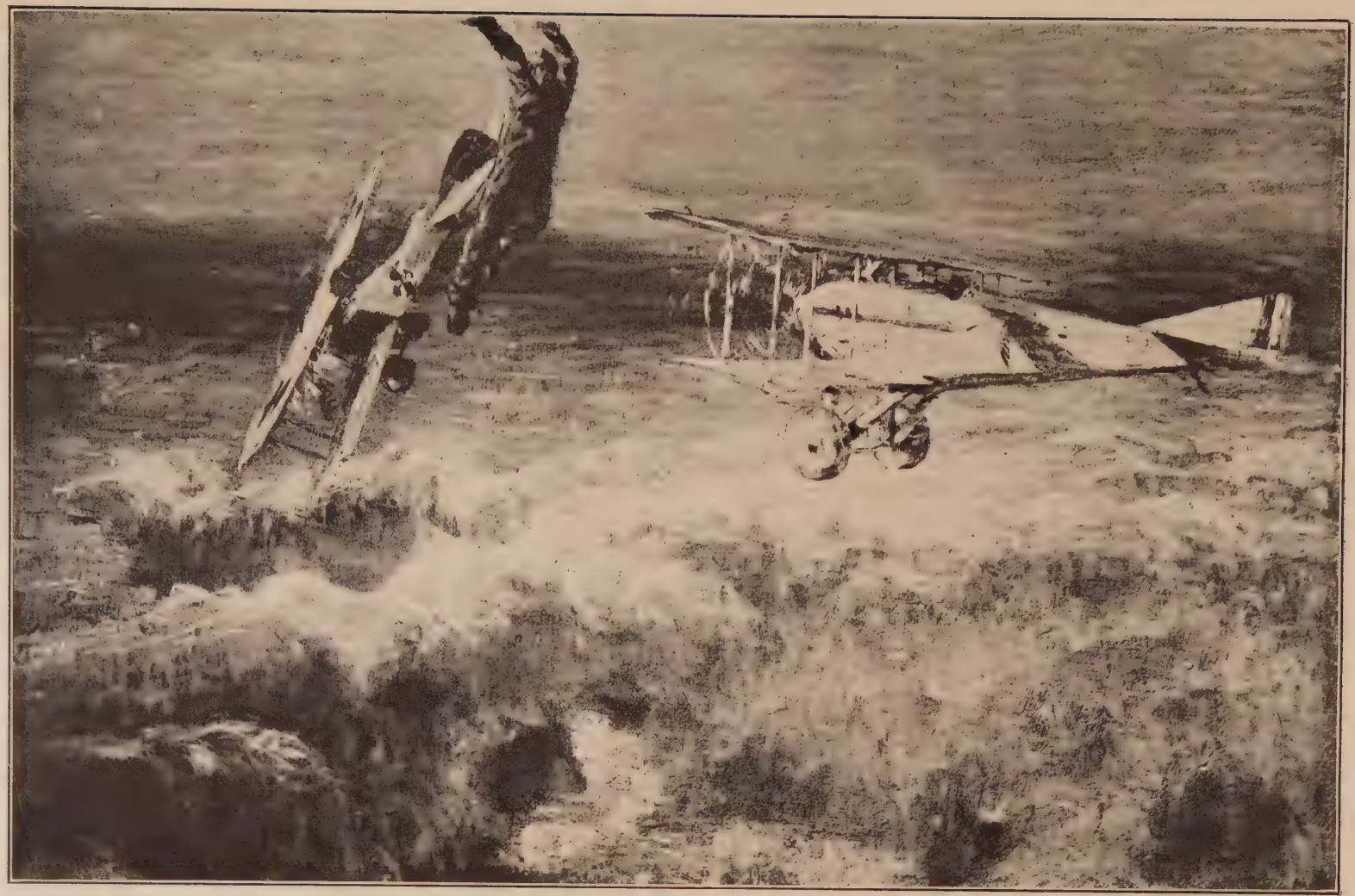
On the larger side Verdun had been saved; pressure had been taken off the French; the British and the French had seized the initiative on the western front and made possible a bid for a decision in the following year. In the east Brusiloff had been enabled to make the last brilliant and despairing Russian offensive which was to bring Austria once more

to the point of ruin. But great as was the burden which Haig had imposed upon German man-power, the Germans were still able to aid their Austrian allies against the Russians and, a little later, to provide the generals and the troops which were to insure the rapid ruin of Rumania.

Had Russia been able to continue in the war the Somme might, conceivably, have proven—as in the winter of 1916-17 it was thought to be—the beginning of the end. But Russia fell, the whole situation changed, the Somme quickly disappeared from memory, and its importance diminished as it was seen through the new perspective. More and more it came to be recognized as the bloody shambles which were to serve as the training school of the new British army.

When the battle was over the German line was so dented and eroded that a retirement was early seen to be inevitable and the hope was long cherished that the retirement might prove the beginning of a great Allied forward march. But the brutal and indefensible German policy of devastation, which created a desert before that new Hindenburg line to which the foe ultimately retired in the following spring, served its purpose and abolished all chance of an Allied resumption of the campaign in Picardy and prepared the way for the astounding triumph of Ludendorff when the Germans regained the offensive in 1918 and Hutier applied his own method of surprise—itself a derivation from British tactics at Cambrai—in which the tank played so considerable a part.

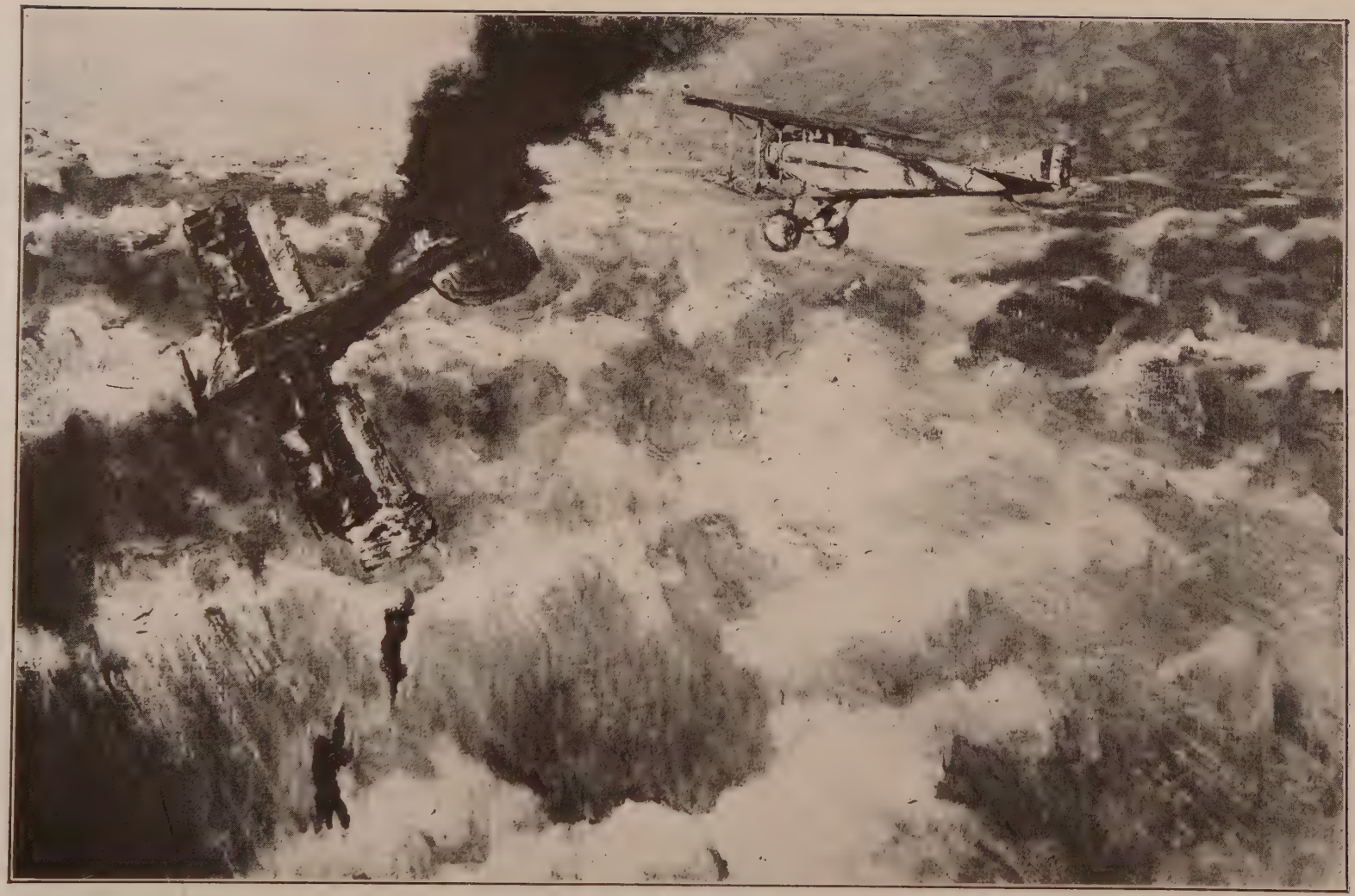
Moreover, still a new perspective was furnished when in August, 1918, Allied and German armies again faced each other on the identical lines of July, 1916, when British troops once more looked across the Ancre and saw the Ridge occupied by German troops and French and British forces were brought to a halt before the old trenches west of Roye and Chaulnes. And in the future it seems that British, French, and German peoples will all look upon the Somme campaigns as we, North and South—no longer conscious of the emotions, the hopes, and dreams of our fathers and grandfathers—look at the sterile battles fought back and forth through northern Virginia in the first three campaigns of our own Civil War, battles which were marked by ter-



Photograph by Paul Thompson

ONE OF GUYNEMER'S VICTORIES

The enemy machine, out of control, drops through the clouds, throwing the observer out as it falls



Photograph by Paul Thompson

GUYNEMER'S FORTY-FIFTH VICTORY

"Kill or be killed. It means quick thinking and nerves of steel, added to absolute indifference to personal danger. And even then chance says the last word in all fighting in the air"



Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

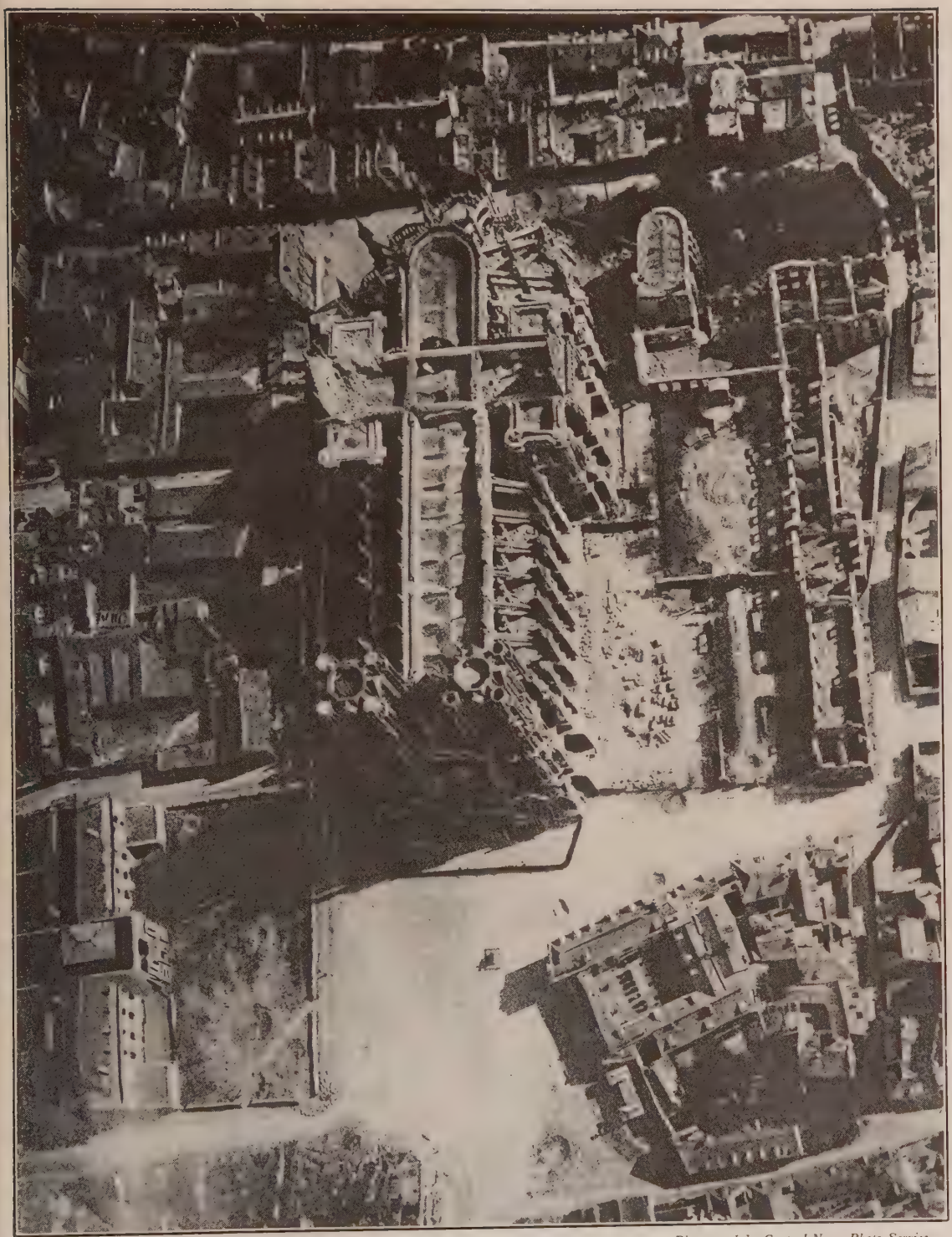
AËROPLANE VIEW OF BOMBARDED GERMAN TRENCHES

By the aid of this picture even civilians can form some faint idea of what it would be to burrow in the ground under the hurricane of exploding shells which destroyed these German entrenchments



AN OBSERVATION BALLOON

Shooting down observation balloons such as this was always one of the many extra hazardous occupations of the aviators



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

RHEIMS FROM ABOVE

This picture shows the crowning infamy of Germany's calculated vandalism. The German idea that to shock and anger civilized peoples past the power of words to express would cow them into quick submission will be one of the hardest things for future students of this war to believe



THE RUINED VILLAGE OF BEAUMONT ON THE MEUSE AS SEEN FROM AN AËROPLANE

Photograph by French Pictorial Service



Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

DROPPING SAFELY FROM A BALLOON

Five French observation balloons broke loose in a gale and drove rapidly toward the enemy's lines. By means of their parachutes some of the observers dropped safely to earth although the observer here shown unfortunately fell within the enemy's lines



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

THE NIGHT RAIDER

Held in the converging rays of two searchlights the raiding Zeppelin makes a conspicuous target for the anti-aircraft guns. Shrapnel can be seen exploding around it

rific slaughter and indescribable bravery and sacrifice, but produced no decision and brought no permanent occupation of territory.

At the Somme the German hope of a Verdun victory was destroyed. The hope of eliminating France before Britain was ready had been abolished on the Heights of the Meuse, and along the Somme the British intervened, as Joffre had planned they should. Together, the Somme and Verdun defeated the second German bid for a decision in the west. But the Russian collapse in its turn neutralized the consequences of Verdun and the Somme, and it was presently to be the mission of France and of Britain to play the old rôle on the familiar and mournful Picardy and Champagne fields, while America prepared to intervene, as Britain had prepared in 1916 before the July 1 attack.

V. THE DESERT

To complete the record of the Somme one more circumstance is of more than passing importance. Here at last there was revealed the full power of modern weapons of destruction. Before the Somme there had been havoc beyond anything other wars had known. Before even the storm had broken upon Verdun the devastation on about Ypres had become a phenomenon known to the whole civilized world, and all that had occurred in Flanders was but child's play compared with the first bombardment in Lorraine in February. Yet about Verdun, where the fighting took place in a sparsely populated region of forests, a savage landscape disguised some part of the wounds of modern warfare.

In Picardy it was otherwise; a smiling country, of rolling hills and deep and pleasant valleys cut by chalk streams—a land of prosperous farms and fertile fields, sown with small villages—was suddenly smitten by a storm which did not pass away but endured for weeks and for months. Over an area ten miles wide by twenty long the whole face of the earth was changed; the heart of the hills blown out, the smoothly rounding slopes of other elevations concealed craters, like those of famous volcanoes; all the interior of the hill had been blown out by mines, and in the chasm that remained an ocean liner could be concealed.

Eastward of Albert, itself a shell-wracked town, along the roads by which the flower of young British and Imperial manhood had marched to death and mutilation—roads the sole surviving detail of old order in a world of chaos—roads recalling the Appian Way in the Campagna—stretched a region indescribable in its ruin. Whether one travelled by the northern, eastern, or southern roads one passed suddenly and almost without warning into a land of desolation terrible beyond words. Westward of Albert, in this time—although later devastation returned with the German, and passed to the other bank of the Ancre—was the pleasant landscape of Picardy, a landscape framed by little woodlands, smiling valleys, coquettish villages; eastward was a Sahara, and something more than a Sahara, recalling the fields about Pompeii or Messina, through which have flowed the streams of lava and of ashes which not only engulf but endure.

At the Battle of the Marne and in the opening campaign of the war the destruction was little more complete than that which might have followed the passage of armies in the Napoleonic era. On the field of the Champagne offensive of September, 1915, the villages were, it is true, almost totally destroyed in places and everywhere reduced to hopeless shells; but the fields, the country itself, remained to be reclaimed by the plough and the farmer. The shallow trenches and the inconsiderable dugouts had survived the artillery preparation of the guns of the calibre employed in that opening period of high explosive warfare.

But at the Somme there was nothing more terrible than the mutilation of the surface of the earth itself, the permanent destruction of hills, the everlasting scarring of the hillsides, the creation of new mountains by mine explosions, and the excavation of valleys where once the hills had been. Where the first-line German trenches had extended from the Ancre to the Somme there was left neither trenches nor the semblance of trenches, the dugouts and their inhabitants alike had been buried as beneath an avalanche, the surrounding hills had been worked by shell fire until they resembled nothing so much as the pictures of the surface of the moon, familiar to readers of old-fashioned geographies.

From the slopes of Mametz Hill, at the very starting place of the

British offensive, one might look north and south and east upon the sites of many little villages, which nestled under the crests of the sharply rising hills. At the very foot of Mametz Hill had been Mametz, but of it not a stone, not a fragment, remained. It had not been buried, it had been literally blown from the surface of the earth; it had dissolved in dust and the dust itself had been swept away. Where once had been a well-built little French village, with its solid houses of plaster and stone, old houses which had endured other centuries and survived other wars, there was nothing. There had been the usual church, the familiar square, the invariable fountain; all the slight but permanent details of the French village; and of all these there was left just nothing.

And what was true of Mametz was equally true of Montauban and Fricourt, of scores of villages from Roye below the Somme to Miraumont above it. The villages were gone, the hills about them had disappeared; the woodlands were obliterated; a streak of red dust amidst the chalky white of the roadside was the sole suggestion of what had once been a village—an occasional half-excavated stump beside a shell crater the only reminder of what had been the communal forest; but for the most part the woods of Picardy, like those of Lorraine about Verdun, were gone and there remained neither stumps nor stump holes, only vast pits dug by the heavy artillery, pits into which in the period of rain and fog men and animals fell and were drowned.

It was at the Somme that this new power of destruction first revealed itself in its full malignant power. There it not alone destroyed all that there was of human habitation and of the fields of human effort, but it swept the earth with fire and sowed it, not with salt but with steel, turned it yellow with exhalations of deadly gases, submerged the upper surface of fertile earth with the rocks and gravel, the all-pervading chalk of the under strata, as if seeking to prevent a future return of men to these fields—to create a permanent desert and make it impossible for men to exist or fruits and foods to grow in the soil on which nations had fought.

Such, in some measure, was the destruction of the First Battle of the Somme in 1916. But the same waves of destruction were at least twice

again to cross and even to pass this Somme battle-ground, to approach Amiens and to return to the lines of July 1. And with the advance of the Germans in March, 1918, a wartime legend of Picardy found mournful refutation. In the village square at Albert there stood, through all the First Battle, a wrecked church; across its tower lay the figure of The Virgin, overturned by German shell fire but still clinging to the tower, always seeming as if about to crash downward into the shell-torn ruin beneath it. But the fall did not come in 1916 and there grew up in all the countryside the belief that when the Virgin of Albert did fall, the war would end. Two years later, when the German returned to Albert, the statue crashed down into dust and ruin, but the war went on and a new and Third Battle of the Somme flamed up over all the ruined and ravaged lands between the Ancre and the Avre, and the tides and currents of war continued to ebb and flow over the ruined land as the sea sweeps backward and forward over submerged cities and engulfed shores.

CHAPTER TEN

VERDUN—THE EPILOGUE

I

THE PAUSE

The fighting before Verdun did not immediately die out following the opening of the Battle of the Somme. The Crown Prince was able to promise his troops, in July, when Haig's first efforts had harvested only inconsiderable profits, that the fight for the Meuse fortress would continue. There were German advances in July and even in August, inconsiderable but unmistakable, and those who lived through the whole siege have supplied testimony that in August and the first days of September the situation seemed to them darkest.

During this period the Germans were in the ditch of Souville and had crept forward to the edge of the Froide-Terre. A further slight advance, the capture of Souville, the single one of the Verdun forts which occupied ground as high as Douaumont, and the defence of the east bank of the Meuse would collapse—the Germans would reach and even pass the river occupying the ruins of the city. The military value of such an achievement would have been small, but the moral value incalculable. In every quarter of the globe Verdun had become a fact and a symbol, to take it now would give the Germans a victory incontestable, and bound to excite world attention.

But the advance was not to come. Slowly, very slowly the furnace of the Somme began to devour German effectives and German resources. Little by little men and guns were shifted from the Meuse to the Ancre, and by September the German effort was over. But enemy resources were still sufficient to hold what had been won and French attacks between Hardaumont Quarries and Souville, directed at Fleury and the Thiaumont works, now only a heap of dust, were savagely repulsed on several occasions.

If the Verdun episode was over for the Germans, and their offensive definitively ended by September, the situation still remained one which the French could not permit to endure. While they held Souville, Verdun was safe, but while the Germans occupied Douaumont, a return to the offensive in the future was always possible for them and Verdun remained in danger—in grave danger. Thus, as early as September, began the preparations for a counter-offensive designed to retake Douaumont and Vaux.

In every circumstance this operation was of purely local importance. For the whole task not more than three divisions were immediately employed, while the Germans continued to employ seven on the front of the coming attack. There was no thought in the minds of the French High Command of launching any general or considerable thrust; their purpose was solely to relieve Verdun from the ever-present menace which would overhang it as long as the enemy held two of the forts of the circle constructed to defend the entrenched camp.

In the whole war, up to this moment, no attack had been so carefully or scientifically planned as the first Verdun counter-offensive. The regiment which had been assigned to retake Douaumont spent a month in a village near Bar-le-Duc, daily making an assault upon a fort exactly like Douaumont and thus familiarizing the men with the details of the objective which they were presently to storm—a training which proved invaluable when Douaumont was finally taken on a day of fog and mist. Meantime, the French had at last obtained artillery of the heaviest type, guns of 400 mm. calibre, which far surpassed the 420 mm. of the Germans in the first days of the war. Their mechanical resources were at last equal to those of their enemy and for their new effort artillery was concentrated about Verdun in enormous quantities, while, as always, French aviators remained masters of the air.

The preparation for the attack was the work of three men, all destined to win new fame in the months that were to come: Pétain, defender of Verdun in the early period, now become chief of a group of armies of which that defending Verdun was but one; Nivelle, a subordinate of Pétain in the early days, now his successor in command of the

Verdun army and presently to succeed Joffre as commander-in-chief of the whole French army and, after a brief tenure, to suffer defeat at the Aisne in the campaign of 1917 and then to disappear, giving way to his old chief; finally, as the immediate commander of the attacking force, General Mangin appears. Little known before, save as a brilliant Colonial, who, commanding a brigade, had retaken Douaumont and held it for brief hours in May, Mangin was to win enduring fame in two Verdun offensives, share the defeat and discredit of Nivelle at the Aisne, but to emerge from brief obscurity as the leader of that army which by its brilliant counter-offensive turned the tide in the campaign of 1918 and won the Second Battle of the Marne. However justly criticised for occasional recklessness and habitual lack of concern for the costs of attack, Mangin earned at Verdun, and thereafter retained, the reputation of being the ablest exponent in the French army of the older qualities of French dash and *élan*.

II. THE OBJECTIVES

For the first counter-offensive Douaumont, Vaux, and the high ground about each had been fixed as the objectives of the wholly local and strictly limited attack. Both forts occupied high ground rather more than a mile inside the German front, as it now existed, and both were covered by intricate trench systems, winding through the wrecks of famous woodlands and along the sides of ravines which had seen the frightful fighting of the earlier periods. Neither fort was itself a defensive work, although both were still intact below ground, and supplied invaluable cover for munitions, supplies, and for a limited amount of reserves. But beyond all else, Douaumont, with its wide sweep over all the surrounding country, was a post of observation, giving a clear view over the enemy's whole field of operation.

Actually the line now ran from the Meuse, between Vachereauville, which was German, and Bras, which was French, eastward along the downward slope of the Côte de Poivre, mainly held by the Germans, and thence southward, along the little saddle connecting the Froide-Terre with the Douaumont Plateau and bearing the Thiaumont fortification

through the ruins of Fleury to the ditch of Souville; thence it curved eastward again before Souville and Tavannes, across the western end of the Vaux Plateau to the little defensive work of Laufée, at which it turned south along the eastern edge of the Woëvre Plain.

The mission of the three divisions of attack was simple. The First was to move westward taking the Hardaumont Quarries and ultimately reaching and seizing the village of Douaumont, north and west of the fort, and occupying the line on which the French had originally checked the German rush and from which they had momentarily retaken Douaumont fort some weeks later. The Second Division was to advance from Froide Terre, take Thiaumont works, Farm and the fort itself; the Third was to move out from the edge of Fleury and Souville upon Vaux.

The distances to be covered were insignificant but they represented the progress which the enemy had been able to make only after six months of the most desperate fighting; every conceivable means had been employed to improve positions naturally strong, and the Germans held these lines strongly, indeed they outnumbered the assailants two to one.

In the plan of operation there was no new detail. There was an enormous multiplication of the number of guns employed and a concentration of the fire upon a very narrow sector. But this had been the characteristic circumstance of many other operations. This was what the Germans had done in February; this was what Haig had done at the Somme on a wider front in July. At the Somme the British front alone had been twenty miles long, in February the Germans had attacked on a front of more than seven, while in the counter-offensive at Verdun the front assailed was less than four; but aside from this, all was planned in the usual way.

The hour for attack was fixed for eleven-thirty in the morning, instead of at dawn, as at the Somme, but it was now late October and the earlier hours were no longer likely to provide an atmosphere clear enough for air observation. In point of fact, on the morning of the attack the greater part of the operation took place in a dense fog and

if, through the concealment of their columns, the French gained, they suffered through the almost complete paralysis of their air service. Between dawn and the "Zero" hour—as the hour of departure was now described in Allied armies—the German lines were to be swept by a frightful bombardment, to be followed, at the appointed time, by the assault itself, covered by the fire of the guns, which, lengthening their range to keep pace with the infantry advance, was to play upon the rearward lines of the enemy to the last possible moment before the victorious troops arrived.

All this had already become an old story in war methods. The thing that is noteworthy about this Verdun attack is the perfection with which all the familiar methods were employed. The numbers engaged were small on both sides, by comparison with the Somme fighting, the area affected insignificant; but, within its modest limits, the Verdun operation was and long remained one of the finest bits of scientific fighting in the whole of the first four years of the conflict. It had a brilliance always to be expected in a French attack, but it had an exactness and a mechanical perfection unexcelled in French, British, or even in German achievement, and possibly unchallenged.

III. DOUAUMONT AND VAUX

At the hour fixed and covered by one of the not-infrequent fogs of late autumn in the Meuse region, Mangin's three divisions left their trenches and swept forward into the German lines, which for long hours had been pounded by the French artillery. Never was an artillery preparation more complete nor a surprise more absolute. The enemy's first lines were submerged without opposition; only in the Hardaumont Quarries, a circumstance due to the character of the position, did the resistance long continue; not until the French approached the second and even the third German trench did they meet with the customary machine-gun fire from isolated points of support.

But despite these isolated checks, despite savage fighting in many of the ravines, the wave went forward. Four hours after it had set out, the observers from Souville could see through the mists, which were at

last breaking, the brown uniforms of French Colonials on the tortured slopes and remains of Fort Douaumont itself. In four hours the victors had traversed the ground which it had taken the enemy six months to cross, and the price of the German advance had been measured in hundreds of thousands.

It was on February 25 that the Brandenburgers had taken the fort by surprise and their exploit had been celebrated by the Kaiser in a despatch in which he described Douaumont as the cornerstone of the chief fortress of France. The cornerstone now was once more French, solidly French; so was the village of Douaumont; so were a score of positions, farms, and woodlands which had become familiar names to the newspaper readers of five continents.

Only toward Vaux were the plans of the French commanders imperfectly realized. Even here the assailants reached the remains of the old ditch, but northward the progress was less satisfactory between Douaumont and Vaux and the lines were withdrawn a little to permit a new artillery preparation before the attack was resumed. But even this disappointment was manifestly to be of brief duration, for Vaux had been well-nigh encircled, the noose had fallen about it and it remained only to tighten it. Douaumont was taken on October 24 and the fate of Vaux was sealed on the same day.

Six thousand prisoners, more than six hundred officers, fifteen guns, and a vast booty of minor weapons were the immediate prizes of this astonishing exploit in which French losses were inferior to the captures of prisoners, and the attacking force was, itself, less than half as strong as the enemy divisions it thus thrust out of positions which had been defended by the French for more than six months and lost—foot by foot and yard by yard—only to be retaken in four hours of a single brief autumn day.

But it was not until November 2 that the full measure of the success was disclosed when the Germans sullenly evacuated Vaux and retired beyond the ravine north of the Vaux Plateau and into the Woëvre Plain below, leaving the French the wrecked skeleton of the old fort—above ground nothing but a heap of blackened ashes, but underground

still possessing intact all its bomb-proof and vaulted chambers. Thus in German hands as in French, Vaux had proven sturdier in defence than its far more considerable neighbour, Douaumont.

With the evacuation of Vaux on November 2 the circle of Verdun defences was once more restored. Of all the system of detached forts which had been constructed before the war to serve as the cover for the vast entrenched camp facing Metz and guarding one of the main lines of invasion, not one remained in German hands. After eight months of fighting, after eight months of the most dramatic and terrible conflict in human history, the French had made good their boast. They had said in February: "They shall not pass"; and, having barred the road from February to October, they had struck back in October and deprived their foes of every foot of conquered ground which was in any measure a menace to the maintenance of the Verdun fortress.

Thus, although it was, itself, a relatively insignificant combat, the first French counter-offensive at Verdun, in October, was a memorable thing; it thrilled the whole world; it aroused in Germany a passion and a bitterness which were ill-concealed. It supplied the ultimate refutation of the assertion of the German General Staff, the assertion on which their whole strategy was based, that France was bled white, exhausted morally as well as physically. By contrast it revealed the soul of the French people as that soul had been revealed once before—at the Marne.

IV. VERDUN ANSWERS THE KAISER

The victory of October 24 had given Verdun security; it remained to give more air to the garrison, still narrowly restrained in the German embrace, which, though partially loosened, was still uncomfortable. From the positions to which they had retired the enemy was still able with his long-range artillery to bombard the town and to cut the lines of communication well behind the town itself. Compared with the situation of the summer, conditions were vastly improved, but the cost of holding the place was still unduly high and might be reduced by another sagacious offensive, also of totally limited character.

Accordingly, all through November and the first half of December there was unceasing preparation for one more thrust, preparation rendered difficult and almost impossible by the character of the country over which the French had to construct new roads and narrow-gauge railways, under German fire and in land torn and scarred by the terrible bombardments, French and German alike, of nine months of unequalled artillery fighting.

But the work was done and on December 15, following closely upon the Kaiser's peace proposal—so closely as to give the appearance that Verdun was itself making historic answer to the German gesture—Mangin again led his troops, this time four divisions instead of three, against the German trenches in another swift surprise attack heralded by another terrific bombardment.

This time the French objectives were north, not east, and they sought, by advancing on the curving front straight across the Heights of the Meuse from below Bras to the Woëvre north of the Vaux ravine, to push them back from the vicinity of Douaumont and enable the French to reëstablish their lines on the positions on which they had made their first stand in the great attack of February, the positions on which it had been expected to meet and break any German offensive.

Once more the attack came in the morning but not in the early hours. It was ten o'clock when the French left their trenches, and in a few brief hours they had swept their enemy out of all the useful ground for several miles northward. Vachreauville on the Meuse, the whole of the Côte de Poivre, Louvemont and Hill 378, Bezonvaux and the Hardaumont position between Douaumont and the Woëvre were taken, the main defensive position beyond the circle of forts was reëstablished; more than eleven thousand prisoners, 115 guns, and the usual wealth of material were captured.

As a surprise, the operation was even more successful than that of October, and as a result not only were the losses utterly insignificant, but for a period of time the enemy disorganization was so great that French patrols crossed the Côte de Talou and pushed northward for

reconnaissances far in advance of the lines on which the thrust was actually halted. But the purpose of this attack was rigidly limited and the resources of the commanders restricted to the minumum necessary for the defence of the positions outlined in advance of the attack as the objectives of the various divisions.

This December attack was the final operation of Nivelle at Verdun, acting under the directions of Pétain. Immediately after it he left to assume the post made vacant by the promotion of Joffre, who became a Marshal of France, but only to disappear from the French High Command. In a very real sense the Verdun campaign had proven his undoing, for despite all the brilliance of the defence he was held responsible for the blunders which had permitted the fortress to remain in so bad a state of preparation and it was further held against him that he had advocated an evacuation of the town after the first days of the German assault.

In the High Command Nivelle's stay was brief and disastrous; he did not realize the hopes which had been founded upon his share in the Verdun campaign. But when he had fallen, France and the world instinctively turned to the man who had defended the town in the early and critical days and it was Pétain, who, by reason of the Verdun achievement, proved the real successor of Joffre—who reorganized the French army and restored its shaken morale after the bitter defeat at the Aisne. As Joffre is the man of the Marne, Pétain was and will remain the central figure of the Verdun campaign, for the qualities which made the defence possible and the victory attainable were his own. Once more a great crisis had produced a great general, ranking with Joffre and Foch in French service, and unrivalled in any other army.

V. AFTERMATH

With the fighting of December 15, the real Battle of Verdun ends. Of all the ground captured during the nine months of struggle the Germans retained, on the east bank of the Meuse, only the advanced positions held by the French on February 21, 1916. On the west bank, however, they still held firmly the important ground taken in the fighting

of April and May, including Dead Man's Hill and Hill 304. While they held this ground, with observation posts on the Côte de Talou, they were still able to hamper French communications and annoy the garrison within Verdun.

As a consequence, Pétain, when he came to the post of Commander-in-Chief in the following summer, promptly organized a third limited offensive and thrust the Germans off both the dominating hills and, in addition, retook the ground south of the Forges Brook, the Côte de Talou and the villages of Samogneux and Champneuville on the east bank of the river, together with Hill 304, thus entirely reëstablishing the old situation, completing the task of restoring that Verdun position from which the French had been thrust in the grim days of February of the previous year and, as it turned out, laying the foundations for an American offensive in September and October, 1918.

By this time Verdun had ceased to have any value in the immediate fighting and the defeat of the Germans was almost more important on the moral than on the military side, for the interest of the world in the fortunes of this Lorraine town did not decrease. But in the story of the Verdun campaign this third and last counter-offensive has a place. Without it the narrative is incomplete. Eight thousand prisoners and many guns were captured in this third blow, bringing the total for the three operations unblocking the town up to 25,000 prisoners and nearly 200 guns.

In the Verdun operation there are three natural phases. The first phase is occupied by the opening attack and the successive following efforts of the Germans on the flanks to prepare the way for the final assault. This is the great period, which endures from February to July, the time in which Verdun bears the brunt of the full German effort and France, awaiting the coming of the British, once more carries the burden of the war upon her shoulders. It is the fighting between February 21 and the hour when the Somme at last began to paralyze German effort on the Meuse which will endure in the minds of men as long as written history endures.

In the second phase, from July to October, Verdun lies vulnerable to

the enemy, her defensive armour pierced from Douaumont to Vaux, momentarily safe but bound to be in danger the moment the German is able to return to the attack. And in all this period the German expected to return and to realize the profits that his preparations had, at a frightful cost, made almost certain.

Last of all in the third phase, in the epilogue, we have the two brilliant counter-offensives of 1916 and the third, in 1917, which together win back all the lost ground, restore Verdun to its old security, and yield a harvest of prisoners and guns which well-nigh balances the original German profit in this respect in the first days of the attack.

VERDUN DELIVERED.



GROUND GAINED BY THE FRENCH, OCTOBER AND DECEMBER 1, 1916

In the military history of the war Verdun stands for the service rendered by France in holding the enemy until Britain could prepare. Had France failed the war would have been lost, as the events of the next two campaigns plainly indicated. In this respect Verdun is only less important than the Marne itself.

On the human side Verdun revealed France as those who had really known the nation had always perceived it to be. The qualities which made the defence possible were not those that the superficial student or observer of France and the French people associate with the race.

There were moments of unsurpassed brilliance, but in the main the struggle was one of endurance and tenacious, solid, sturdy peasant virtues, and won for France what must in many ways be regarded as the greatest battle in her thousand years of military history. It is hardly too much to say that the world view of France changed with Verdun; the earlier view had been inaccurate, a reflection upon those who held it rather than upon the French; yet in a very real sense Verdun was a national epic, only complete when victorious French soldiers again held the last of the lost positions of February, 1916.

FIGHTING IN ITALY



Courtesy of Miss A. A. Bernardy

AN ITALIAN SENTINEL IN THE ALPS



A SENTRY AT A MINOR OBSERVATION POST

Courtesy of Miss A. A. Bernard



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ITALIAN SOLDIERS SCALING A MOUNTAIN

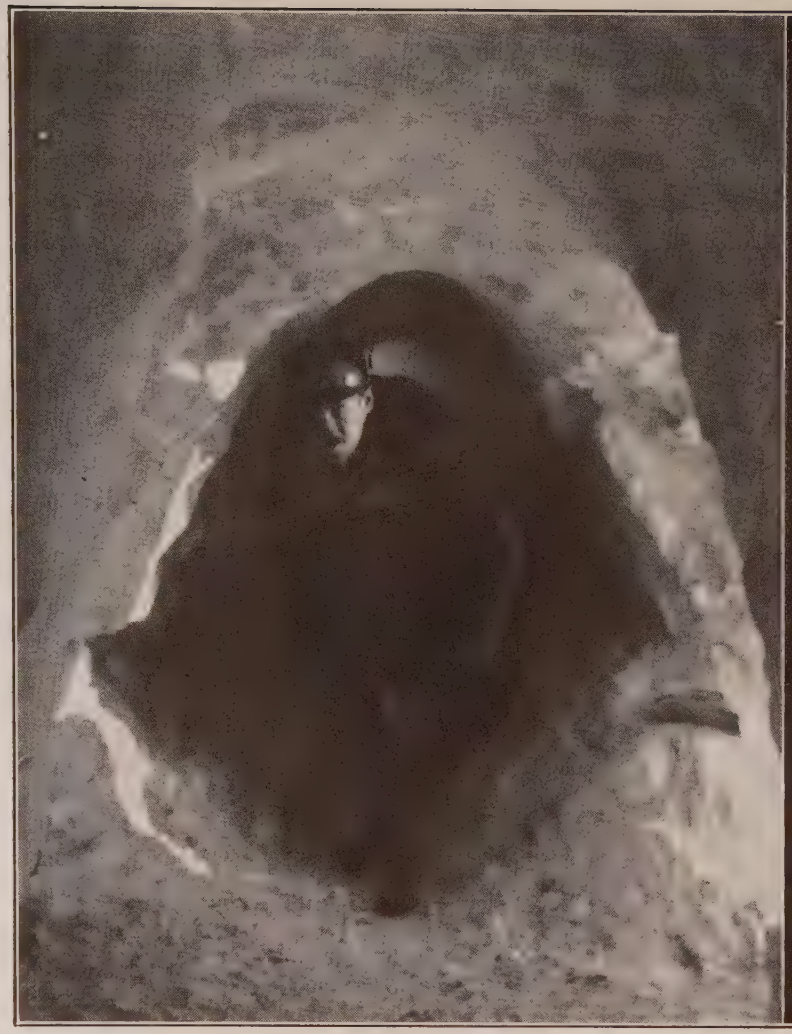
This is suggestive of some of the difficulties the Italians had to overcome



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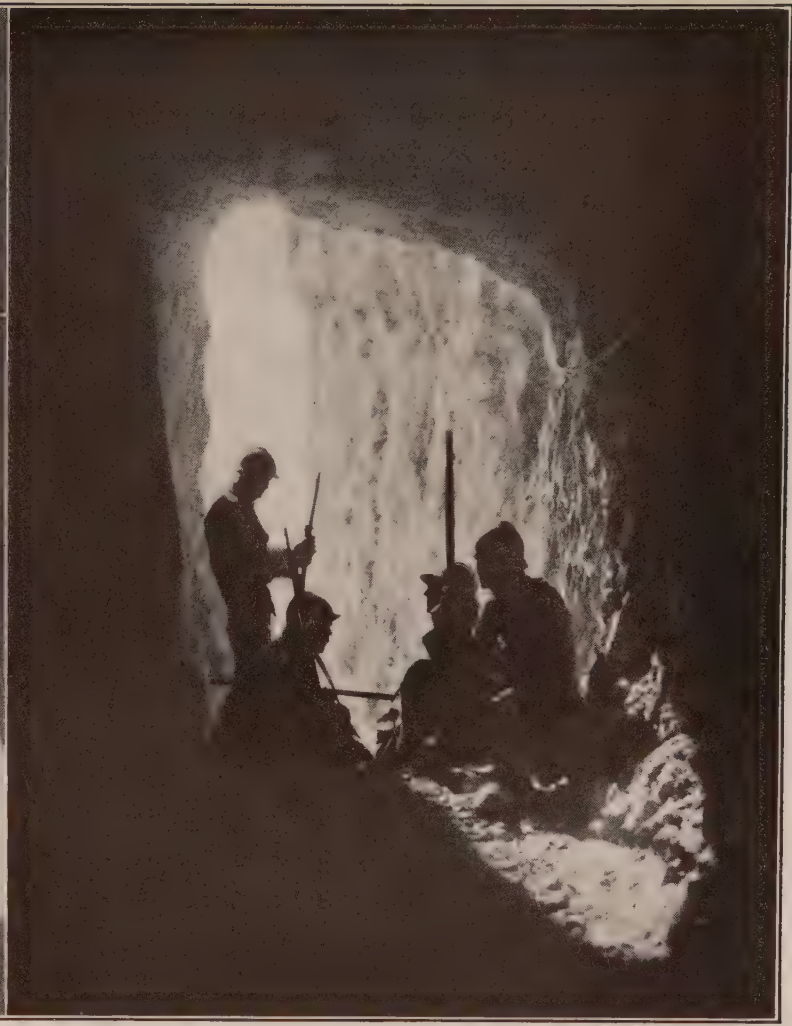
A WRECKED ZEPPELIN FALLING TO EARTH

These lonely sentinels are watching the Zeppelin hurtle through space after having been hit by the Italian airplane



Courtesy of Miss A. A. Bernardy

MANY OF THE ITALIANS' OBSERVATION POSTS WERE CAVES SUCH AS THIS DUG IN THE ICE



Courtesy of Miss A. A. Bernardy

A SMALL GUARD OF ITALIAN SOLDIERS PROTECTING THE ENTRANCE TO A MOUNTAIN PASSAGEWAY



Photograph from Brown Brothers

AN INGENIOUS TROLLEY DEVISED BY THE ITALIANS TO TRANSPORT THEIR WOUNDED OVER THE MOUNTAINS



Photograph from Brown Brothers

AN ICE FORT ON AN ITALIAN MOUNTAIN

These are not boys playing soldiers in a back yard snow fort as one might think at first glance, but men fighting in the world's greatest war. They are the famous Alpini entrenched in the ice near Cadore



Photograph from Brown Brothers

ARMOUR PROTECTION DEVISED FOR THOSE WHO CRAWL FORWARD TO CUT THE ENEMY'S BARBED WIRE



Courtesy of Miss A. A. Bernardy

ITALIAN INFANTRY ATTACKING



© Western Newspaper Union

A NIGHT BOMBARDMENT



© Western Newspaper Union

ST. BERNARD DOGS READY FOR A TRIP THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS

Italy's dogs did their share nobly in helping to win the war. Besides doing their bit for the Red Cross they were invaluable in carrying supplies to troops in the mountains, stationed in places inaccessible to horses and mules

CHAPTER ELEVEN

ITALY IN DEFENCE AND OFFENCE

THE GENERAL ALLIED CONCEPTION

I

While the German attack upon Verdun was in its second stage, in the middle of May, a terrific Austrian offensive suddenly broke out along the Trentine frontier between the Adige and the Brenta. This offensive was the natural corrollary of the Verdun operation, it had the same purposes, both larger and smaller; that is, its main purpose was, if possible, to inflict such a defeat upon Italy as to compel the Savoy Monarchy to retire from the war, just as Verdun was, at its maximum, to eliminate France. But the secondary purpose was to prevent an Italian offensive on the Isonzo front, as the Lorraine operation aimed at forestalling the Somme offensive.

We have then, in turning now to the operations both in the Italian and Russian fields, to remember what were the major strategic conceptions of the two enemies, for the campaign of 1916. The Allies had planned a general concentric attack upon the Central Powers delivered on all fronts and calculated to place upon Germany and Austria a strain beyond their resources to meet. Britain and France were to attack at the Somme, Russia from the Pripet Marshes to Rumania, Italy along the Isonzo and toward Trieste and Laibach; there was to be a thrust upward from Salonica and finally there was the reserved possibility of still further pressure upon Austria occasioned by the entrance of Rumania into the war at the appropriate moment.

To meet such an attack the Central Powers had to choose between passive waiting and action in advance of their enemies. In the German calculation, the advantages of the so-called preventive-offensive, the defensive-offensive were counted overwhelming. It was assumed that Russia, after her defeats of 1915, would be incapable of making any

serious movement before midsummer; that Britain would be unready even at midsummer, and that the Balkan threat could safely be ignored for the time being. This left Italy and France to be dealt with by the Austrians and Germans, respectively, while the two Latin nations were still without the aid of the Slav or the Anglo-Saxon. Berlin could reckon, too, that if Italy and France were heavily beaten, Rumania would hardly venture into the war on what would then obviously be the losing side.

In this spirit, as we have seen, Germany in February undertook her great attack upon Verdun. She counted upon a swift and colossal victory, but when this became impossible, she continued, partly because she had accumulated her munitions, men, and guns before Verdun and must continue there or else abandon the offensive for a period of time; partly because she was still of the opinion that, even though Verdun were no longer to prove the victory she had expected, it might serve as a furnace in which French man-power would be consumed and that, in consequence, France would be unable to participate largely in the Somme offensive, of the coming of which the German General Staff was well informed.

Now with respect of Italy the situation was equally plain. All Italian preparation was directed toward the delivery of a decisive blow toward Trieste and immediately upon Gorizia in the late summer, which was the earliest date possible, given Italy's lack of the necessary military supplies. Therefore, if Austria struck in May, she might win such a victory as the Germans had sought and missed at Verdun, but failing this she might so cripple Italy, so exhaust her slender stock of munitions, that the Gorizia stroke, when it came, would be easily repulsed.

Verdun and the Somme were such colossal episodes that they entirely fill the stage in the campaign of 1916 and serve to obscure the other circumstances. Yet each was a detail in a general scheme. Both groups of contending powers sought the initiative, both planned to attack, but while the Entente nations were still unequally ready and thus unable to act early and at the same moment, the Central Powers

were ready and could throw their main masses upon France and Italy before either could be supported by Russia and Britain. In their first stages both the German campaign in France and the Austrian in Italy sought a decisive victory, but the secondary purpose of each was to prevent a decisive victory of the enemy, by using up the armies of two nations before these of all four could engage.

We have seen that the Verdun attack failed at once as a decisively victorious action, we have seen that it was a partial failure so far as its secondary purpose was concerned. But it is true that in some measure the French effort at the Somme was lessened by the strain of Verdun, and it is conceivable that, within limits, the Germans did thus lessen the extent of peril which the Somme had for them. In the case of Italy, the calculation of the Germans was more obviously faulty. If they underestimated the French power in preparing their Verdun operation and thus met a heavy defeat, by ignoring the Russian conditions they sent Austria into an Italian campaign which occupied her best troops at a critical moment, permitted Russia to win great victories in the east, and almost brought the Hapsburg edifice down in ruin.

Each of the campaigns—that in France, that in Italy, and that in Russia—is of itself a whole and its unity is best preserved by dealing with it separately, but it is equally vital to keep clearly in mind the relations existing between the several operations. Germany struck France in February; while she was still engaged at Verdun she pushed Austria against Italy in May. In June Russia attacked Austria; in July Britain entered the French campaign and attacked at the Somme; in August Italy struck in the Gorizia; and, finally, in September Rumania entered the war and attacked Austria.

Thus German strategy failed because it neither won a decisive victory in France or in Italy, nor prevented Allied offensives. Allied strategy failed later, not primarily because the German attacks had lessened the force of the Allied blows but mainly because the Germans were better organized, possessed the incalculable advantages of a unified command and the interior position, and lastly, possessed on the eastern fronts an overwhelming advantage in heavy artillery. Of all these ad-

vantages most weight must be laid upon the unity of command. Two years and many bitter disappointments were yet to be required to bring the Entente Powers to the point where national pride was laid aside and —in the hour of gravest peril—a French general called to command all the Allied armies and to turn defeat into victory.

But in May, when Austria struck Italy, the Allied campaign was still in the making; Haig and Brusiloff were unready, French counter-blows at Verdun had been checked, and the Germans were advancing on both of the wings, clearing the way for their final attack by the centre, which never came. The moment was promising, the Italians were unready, and the Allied publics were already becoming anxious and disheartened by the long series of unexpected reverses, which had come instead of the opening of the cycle of successes expected and calculated to prove the prelude to decisive victory in the campaign of 1916.

II. TRENTINE GEOGRAPHY

The front chosen by the Austrians for their attack was the obvious sector. The great mass of the Trentine Alps projects into the Italian plain like an enormous peninsula. It is flanked on either side by huge mountains, by the familiar Dolomites on the east and the Ortler and Azamello groups on the west. Between these two systems of snow-capped peaks the Adige River descends in the narrow Val Lagarina from the north and beside the river are the railway and the highway. Above Botzen two railway lines meet, one coming down from the Brenner Pass and the other eastward from the Pusterthal and both are protected from Italian observation or attack. At the south, just before this corridor reaches the Italian frontier, it opens out into a series of smaller corridors, each of which bears the same relation to the main corridor as the fingers to the wrist. At this point of separation is the Austrian city of Trent, Italian by population and character but Austrian by virtue of Italy's failure to complete her unification in 1866.

Possessing this corridor, the Austrians could move troops secretly and in large numbers south to Trent—which was itself a fortress covered by a series of detached forts—and from Trent the troops could be

sent southward through these smaller corridors, those of the Adige on the west and the Brenta on the east followed by railways, and those of the Vallarsa, the Val Terragnola, the Val d'Astico, and the Val d'Assa between, each of which was followed by a carriage road. Bringing their masses secretly to Trent, the Austrians could then deploy them by the radiating valleys and highways, munition them from the rear by railways, and hurl them at the Italians at the chosen moment.

Such an attack would be instantly perilous for the Italians, for they stood, facing this danger, on the lower slopes of the Alps and had behind them—and not more than a dozen miles away—the Venetian Plain itself. Thus, if the Italians should be forced to retire over this thin edge of high ground which they held, the Austrians would debouch into the plain by half a dozen valleys and would be within a scant ten miles of Verona and Vicenza and thus of the main railroad by which all the Italian armies, a hundred miles to the east and northeast along the Austrian frontier from Cortina to the Isonzo, were munitioned and supplied.

If the Italians were thus pushed off the high ground into the plain, then, at best, they would be able to get their armies back behind the Adige and the Po and lose only the territory and cities east of these rivers, but, at worst—and the worst would be possible—all of Cadorna's troops would be enveloped, cut off from their bases, and captured in a grandiose Sedan. This was the inherent viciousness of the Italian situation. This was the threat Austria had ever held over Italy's head; this was one of the reasons why Italy had entered the war not merely to redeem her Latin brothers of the Trentino, but also to possess the keys to the doorway which led to the very inmost chamber of her own house.

By this corridor invader after invader had descended into the Venetian Plain; it was the immemorial route of the German barbarians; it had been the road of many Austrian eruptions; Napoleon had fought and won two famous victories—Rivoli and Primolano, at the entrance of two of the lesser corridors. While Venice had held Trent, one of the few gateways to the plain was closed, but when Austria gained and continued to hold this gateway, all of Venetia beyond the Adige was well nigh indefensible and all offensives against Trieste

had to be undertaken with full recognition of the great peril existing far in the rear.

Two of the little villages in this region, Arsiero and Asiago, termini of railroads coming up to the edge of the hills, are of more than passing interest, because both were taken in the Austrian offensive and mark its extreme limit, and both were subsequently retaken by Austro-German forces when, after the disaster of Caporetto, Italy was forced to retire behind the Piave and the Central Powers once more endeavoured to reach the Italian rear by the Trentine route. In 1916 Italy escaped disaster, in 1917 it came, but in both cases the successful defence of the very edge of the high ground, the last ridge north of the plain, prevented a complete rout and a retreat to the Adige. Asiago and its plateau, its high grounds of the Setti Communi, anciently seven German-speaking Comunes, the mountains of Pasubio, Coni Zugna, Cengio and Pau the final strongholds of Italian defence these with Monte Cimone, lost and retaken in the struggle, are the geographical landmarks of the brief Trentine campaign.

III. THE ATTACK

The Austrian army undertaking the Trentine offensive was commanded by the Archduke Charles, heir to the Austrian throne and destined at no distant date to succeed the aged Francis Joseph. It was of more than passing significance, too, that the heir to the Hohenzollern should have been selected for Verdun and the heir to the Hapsburg throne for the Trentine adventure, in each case the selection was a fair indication of the degree of confidence existing in German and Austrian staffs, for the prestige of such exalted persons is not risked in any doubtful ventures. The Archduke had immediately under his command some fifteen divisions, 225,000 strong, the pick of the Austrian army, but nearly 200,000 other troops were crowded into the narrow corridor and he had also nearly 2,000 guns, many of them of the heaviest calibre—an artillery concentration far in excess of any Italian resource, immediate or eventual.

On May 14 the preliminary bombardment began on the whole

front of the Trentino from Lago di Garda to the heights east of the Brenta. It was a bombardment wholly like that which from the Forest of Gremilly burst upon the Verdun front on February 21 and it had equally devastating effects. Under it the Italian first-line defences disappeared. Once more—as at Verdun, too—the initial phase of an offensive disclosed the defenders unready. Like the French at Verdun, the Italians between the Adige and the Brenta had suspected the coming attack, but they had made inadequate preparation and hopelessly underestimated its violence.

Accordingly what followed in the next few days was a perfect repetition of the Verdun episode. On May 15 the Austrians passed to the offensive and began their attack on the front from the Val Lagarina, through which flows the Adige, to the Val Zugana by which the Brenta comes down to the Venetian Plain. In the next fortnight the enemy advanced rapidly. His progress on the flanks—as at Verdun—was relatively slight, but in the centre he pushed down through Arsiero and Asiago, cleared the Communi Plateau, and arrived within five miles of Schio, which is in the plain and at the same time threatened, by pushing eastward and westward from his advanced centre, to cut off the Italian troops on the flanks still successfully holding the Adige and Brenta valleys. On June 1 there was, then, on the Trentine front, exactly the same crisis which had come somewhat sooner before Verdun, when Douaumont Fort fell and the Germans were at the last line of possible French defence on the east bank of the Meuse.

But, as at Verdun, the defeated and surprised defenders had hung on just long enough to give their general staff time to save the situation. On May 25, Cadorna had prepared his counter-thrust and a fresh army intervened, as Pétain's army had intervened at Verdun. In both cases the situation was desperate by the time assistance came. But in the Italian case the immediate effect of the intervention was more successful. Beginning on June 1, the Italians counter-attacked along the whole front; by June 3, Cadorna could inform the world that the Austrian advance had been checked; during the next ten days most of the lost ground was recovered.

Meantime, on June 4, one day after the Austrian check, the guns of Brusiloff in Volhynia and Galicia sounded the overture to the Russian offensive and in the next few days the terrible Austrian disasters about Lutsk and Dubno and, south, in Bukowina, made an urgent demand upon Austria for those divisions of her best troops concentrated in the Trentine corridor. Thereafter the Austrian effort died out, the Trentine front ceased to be active. Austrian troops hastened eastward to check the Russian advance upon Kovel, Italian troops were moved southward to aid in the preparation of the Gorizia attack.

It is perhaps inaccurate to say that Russia saved Italy, it seems that Cadorna's counter-offensive had already become effective before Brusiloff's attack was launched. Had the Russians not attacked, however, the Italians would have had for a period of time to concentrate their attention upon the Trentine front, and their Gorizia offensive would have had to wait. On the other hand, had the Austrians not embarked upon this costly venture, it may be doubted whether Brusiloff would have won so great a success on June 5 and the succeeding days. In any event, the Trentine gamble was for Austria a costly failure, bringing disaster in the east and having no serious effect upon Italy's main plan which was for her own offensive on the Isonzo. Italy's suffering was not vain—nor was it comparable in extent or duration to French agony at Verdun.

IV. ON THE ISONZO

In May and the first days of June Italy had been hard put to defend the back door to her own house. The danger had abated when Cadorna's new army had counter-attacked; it passed when Russia began her victorious assault in the east and compelled Austria to turn from the Italian back door, at the Trentino, to her own back door along the Carpathians. Thus saved from all immediate peril, the first task of the Italians was to guard against a return of the danger—to construct railroads and defences that would prove sufficient if the Austrian should knock at the back entrance again, as he might, as he did in fact less than two years later. By the end of July Cadorna could feel that this

work had been well done and that he could now turn his attention to his main task, the forcing of the front door into Austria.

This front door was the Gorizia stronghold, known for many months thereafter as the Gorizia bridgehead. A parallel for this front—thinking of geography rather than history—is found in a smaller scale in the circumstances of Thermopylæ, although it is well to remember that Thermopylæ was lost, while the position, but not the town of Gorizia, was never surrendered by the Austrians in the campaign of either 1916 or 1917, in both of which it was the objective of terrific attacks.

The Gorizia position, as it confronted Cadorna in July, 1916, was simply a strongly defended system of lines between the Julian Alps and the sea; its extent was little more than thirty miles, but this extent was sharply divided into three distinct regions: the last spurs of the Alps, stretching down in the form of the great Bainzizza Plateau with a series of peaks, to achieve world fame in 1917; lower ground in and about the Austrian town of Gorizia, peopled by Slavs and Italians; and, finally, the Carso, a limestone ridge rising between the valley in which Gorizia huddled and the Adriatic.

In front of all three sectors flows the Isonzo River, coming down out of the gorge at the foot of the Bainzizza Plateau, washing the foot of Monte Sabotino on its western bank, Monte Santo on its eastern, and a little to the south touching Podgora Hill, due west of Gorizia and just across the Isonzo, facing the town. Still farther to the south, but on its eastern bank, rises the Carso Plateau, which crowds it westward in a wide curve, beyond which it enters the usual swampy ground found at the mouth of all Venetian rivers and through this reaches the sea below the little town of Monfalcone, also Austrian.

North of Monte Sabotino the country is such that it offers no adequate communications for an army advancing from the Venetian Plain and seeking to burst into Austria. Actually the only available entrance into Austria for an Italian army of invasion is the narrow stretch between the Alps and the sea, between Monte Sabotino and the southern edge of the Carso, which falls abruptly into the sea. Each of the three distinct sectors was defended by a system of trenches and permanent

works, prepared in the long period between the outbreak of the war and Italy's entrance and constructed with a full use of the lessons taught by trench warfare in France. Monte Sabotino to the north, Podgora Hill west of Gorizia, and Monte San Michele on the edge of the Carso were the three bulwarks of the defence system.

Eastward from Podgora and across the Isonzo stood Gorizia, purely Italian in character despite a large Slavic element in its population. Under cover of Podgora several bridges cross the Isonzo, one of them carrying the main railroad from Gorizia to Udine in the north, while at the foot of the Carso the only other important railroad—that from Venice to Trieste—crosses the Isonzo and follows the coast to the Austrian seaport. Holding both ends of the bridge under Podgora, the Austrians were able to send troops at will to the west bank of the river, and this circumstance earned the whole position the name of the Gorizia bridgehead. (The French position of the Hills of the Meuse east of Verdun and across the river was analogous, and the Germans invariably spoke of the French positions as the Verdun bridgehead.)

Against this Gorizia position Italy had stormed in the first days of her own war, while Austria had her main masses occupied against Russia and Serbia. But on the narrow front only a relatively small Italian force could be employed and Austria with fewer troops but superior artillery was able to halt the Italian advance. In 1915 Italy lacked the guns to undertake any serious offensive against Gorizia; she was still inadequately prepared in 1916, when the first real effort was made; in 1917, when fully ready, her preliminary success was annulled by the defeat of Caporetto.

The Italian purpose in the Gorizia offensive was twofold. Cadorna sought to force the main gate into Austria, to open the way eastward to Laibach, to repeat in some degree Napoleon's great campaign of 1797, which reached Leoben and compelled the Treaty of Campo-Formio. But hardly secondary was the purpose to push southward to Trieste, cut its communications with Austria, and, in due course of time, capture that city, which ever since 1866 had beckoned Italian patriots and constituted the chief jewel in Italia Irredenta. Actually

the fate of Trieste was bound up in that of the Gorizia position, not in the fate of the town itself, but of the whole position. If Italy could force the gateway, thrust through and beyond the narrow gap between the sea and the mountains, Trieste was doomed. But it is well to recognize that the operation itself was not directed at Trieste, which lay to the south and well outside the fighting zone.

Again, it is well to recall the three separate elements of the Gorizia position. It was necessary for Italy to gain all three. For, if she merely broke through at the centre and, taking Podgora, occupied Gorizia, her advance would be checked by the converging fire from both Monte Sabotino and Monte San Michele; while even an extension of her success on the Carso, to the south, would be insufficient to open her roadway while the batteries upon Monte Sabotino and the outlying spurs of the Bainzizza Plateau commanded her flank, her rear, and the two essential lines of communication. To final success, moreover, the capture of all three positions would be but a preliminary part, no success could be of more than local value, while the Bainzizza Plateau with its peaks of Monte Santo and Monte San Gabriele still held out. Actually the fighting in 1916 did not seriously threaten the Austrians on Bainzizza, but the following year the main campaign of Cadorna was concentrated to the north.

For a whole year Italy had been preparing against the day when her troops would be hurled against the Gorizia bridgehead. What the British army went through before the Somme the Italian army experienced in the months preceding the opening of the Gorizia operation. In both cases the enemy sought by a forestalling attack to prevent the Allied offensive, in both cases the attempt failed. In the case of Italy the failure was complete when Cadorna had slammed to the Trentine back door and, two months later, he was able to strike at the Isonzo.

V. GORIZIA

On August 6, Cadorna delivered his great blow. At this moment the German advance at Verdun was practically over, the strength of the Germans on the Meuse was rapidly ebbing away, to reinforce the armies

at the Somme. In the latter field the British were at last beginning to make real progress, they were getting their stride. Away to the east Brusiloff's offensive was, in fact, past its crest, but still advancing. East and west alike, the Central Powers were on the defensive and in retreat. The hour was propitious; Allied fortunes were mounting—seemed, in fact, to have reached the highest point since the days immediately following the Battle of the Marne.

The first three days of the Gorizia offensive were days of violent assault, after artillery preparation, against all three sectors. To the north, Sabotino; in the centre, Podgora; and to the south, Monte San Michele were taken and the victorious Italians pushed forward beyond all three. On August 8 they closed in upon Gorizia and took the town. In the next few days they consolidated the conquered ground and pushed the Austrians back off the high ground of which Monte San Michele is the commanding elevation, across a little depression known as the Vallone, and took foot at the base of the main Carso Plateau. Nearly 20,000 prisoners and a vast store of material were captured. The greatest victory of Italian arms had been achieved in a brilliant and inspiring fashion.

Yet, with Gorizia taken, it at once became clear that Italy had only made a beginning. North and south of the valley of the Wippach, at the western end of which Gorizia is situated, the Austrians still held commanding high ground. From Bainzizza, Monte Santo, and Monte San Gabriele they swept Gorizia, which was beneath them, and from the Carso their guns commanded both the Wippach Valley and the narrow shore between the mountains and the sea followed by the railroad and the road to Trieste. Italy had forced the outer door, the vestibule, to the Gorizia gateway, but the Austrians still held their main positions; they had long ago prepared against just what had happened and the Italians, after their first successes, found themselves—like the French after the great preliminary success in Champagne in September, 1915—face to face with new defences manned by rapidly growing reserves.

And—like the French attack in Champagne, like all the many offen-

sives of the past and of the immediate future—the Italian rush at the Isonzo came to a dead halt. There were needed a new artillery preparation, a new concentration of guns, and the creation of an additional system of highways and light railways. Cadorna was where Haig had been after the opening success at the Somme. The success had been vastly greater than that of the British general, but the natural obstacles now confronted were also far greater and Italy lacked both the guns and the munitions for an immediate renewal of the Gorizia campaign.

In point of fact, before the end of August it was clear to all informed observers that Italy had shot her bolt for 1916. She had exhausted her slender stock of munitions. The double strain of the Trentino defensive and the Gorizia offensive had left Cadorna without the material out of which to construct a further successful advance at Gorizia before the end of the fighting season. Costly attacks by brave soldiers lacking in artillery support, there were, but they failed as they had failed in the case of the British and of the French. Only nations like France and Great Britain possessed the resources to transform themselves industrially for a warfare with Germany and her Austrian ally, for a warfare which was mechanical beyond all else.

Thus, exactly at the moment when Brusiloff's campaign in the east was slowing down, and for the same reasons, Cadorna's efforts in the south lessened. The great concentric attack of the Allies lasted little more than a month, it placed a tremendous strain upon the enemy, but the strain could not be kept up for any considerable time. Both in Italy and in Russia the first achievements surprised the Central Powers, who had woefully underrated their foes, but despite the calculations in Allied capitals at the moment, the strain was by no means beyond German resources. It was met promptly and successfully.

Of the balance of the Italian campaign it is necessary to say no more, now. It was a preparation for the larger effort of 1917, which almost achieved success. What is of interest and of importance, however, is the fact that on August 27 the Italian Government declared a state of war to exist between Italy and Germany and thus placed their country

squarely beside the other great powers with which Italy had already made many agreements but in whose enterprise she had hitherto been a partner only in a limited sense.

The reasons for this strange situation were many. With Germany Italy had no quarrel; she had until recently been an ally—and a loyal ally—of the German Empire, despite her age-long hatred of Austria. In her struggle for unity she had fought with the Prussians against the Austrians in 1866; in the industrial development of modern Italy Germany had played a considerable rôle—not without profit to herself but with the result that many influences in the world of finance and commerce in the Italian Peninsula were under German control. No such intense hatred of Germany, as existed in France, was to be found in Italy in the first three years of the war; it was not to protect herself against Germany, but to recover territories held by Austria but rightfully Italian that Italy had declared war; and the necessity of a common battle against Germany was only slowly perceived in Italy.

When Italy did declare war against Germany, her action proved to be the preface to the entrance of Rumania into the conflict and was taken for the express purpose of influencing Bucharest at a critical moment. But although Rumania did promptly imitate the Italian example and declare war alike upon Germany and Austria, her swift fall to complete ruin robbed the Italian action of any vital importance. There was, and there remained until after the terrible Italian defeat at Caporetto, a year later, an unmistakable coldness between Italy and her allies. To some extent Italy suffered thereby, in a certain measure her reasonable demands for aid—for the materials essential to the creation of an adequate war machine—were heard and rejected by those who were still influenced by distrust and resentment that Italy had so long refrained from risking all in a complete commitment to the alliance against Germany.

However just or unjust the feeling, the fact that it existed must be recognized, since it had a certain influence upon the course of the war until the close of the following year. But the declaration of war upon

Germany in August, 1916, was the first step toward a complete understanding between Italy and the nations fighting Germany and, while the immediate effects were unfortunately small, in the larger view it contributed to strengthening the Allied cause and removing what might have proved a later cause of weakness.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE LAST RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE

I

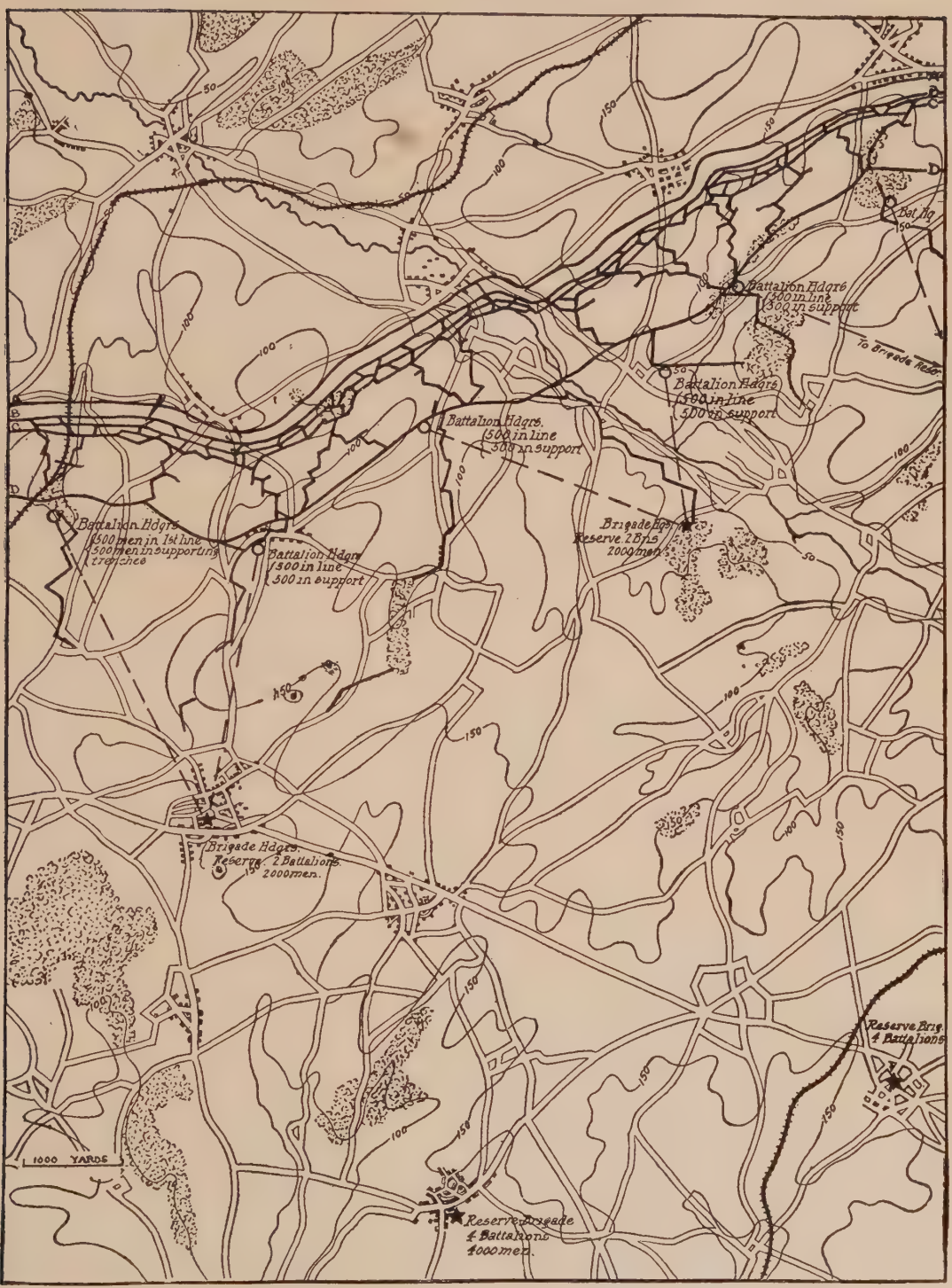
LOOKING EASTWARD

While the great events which marked the Verdun and Somme operations were unfolding on the western battle-front; while France was standing with her back to the wall in Lorraine; Britain making her final preparations in Picardy, and Italy desperately struggling to hold the Trentine gateway to the Venetian Plains, another great campaign was in progress on the eastern front. In the first days of June Russia was launching what was to prove the last campaign of the Romanoff Empire. The narrative of the western operations has been told as a separate phase of the campaign of 1916, because only in this way can the unity of that campaign be preserved; yet it is essential now, when we look eastward, to recall how considerable was the interdependence between the eastern and western operations and to emphasize the time relations between the larger events on either front.

The Russian campaign opened in the first days of June. It had been preceded by considerable but relatively unimportant operations by Kuropatkin and Evarts northward of Pripet Marshes, which attracted passing attention at the moment but resulted in no real achievement. At the hour when the armies of Brusiloff launched the great assault from Pinsk to the frontiers of Rumania, German troops were mounting the Vaux Plateau in Lorraine, and before the Volhynian offensive had reached its first crisis, Fort de Vaux had fallen and Verdun was palpably *in extremis*. At the same hour Austrian troops were still threatening to pass the last barrier to the Venetian Plains and the new British armies were still unready to begin the Somme offensive.

The Russian blow had, therefore, an important influence upon western events; it produced an immediate interruption of the Austrian of-

PLAN OF A MODERN BATTLEFIELD



A typical section of trench line of about six miles showing (A) enemy first line, (B) first line, and the supporting and communication trenches behind, with the disposition and numbers of the troops in the first line, in support, and in reserve. A section of front held by one battalion (1,000 men) may be from 250 to 1,000 yards long, or more than half a mile. Half the battalion is in the first line and the other half in support in the other trenches. Behind these are an equal number of reserves at brigade headquarters, and still farther back another force equal to all these to alternate with them.

The contour lines, showing the ground elevation in metres (3.28 feet), are important, as they show the reason for the location of batteries, trenches, hospitals, etc., on this and on maps on succeeding pages. Parallel lines indicate roadways, heavy crossed lines are railroads, and shaded sections are woods



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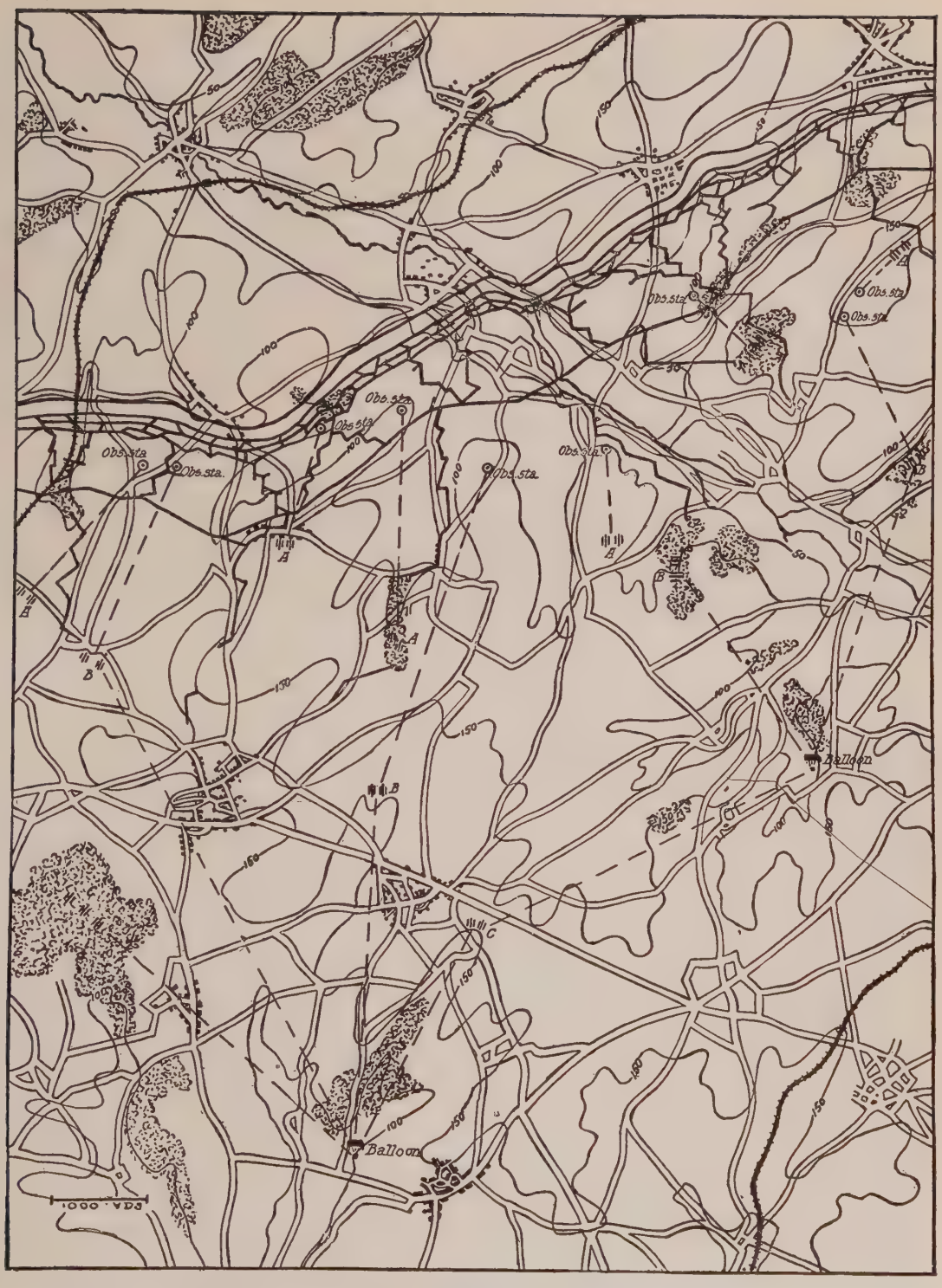
A MODERN BATTLE FRONT

Showing an attack. The men in the foreground leaving their trench, corresponding to "B" on the map on the opposite page, are charging toward the trench line, corresponding to "A," visible in the background of the picture



AN ATTACK—CROSSING "NO MAN'S LAND"

What the trench lines look like in a chalk country. The troops are leaving trench corresponding to "B" on the map and attacking "A." The supporting and communication trenches show plainly



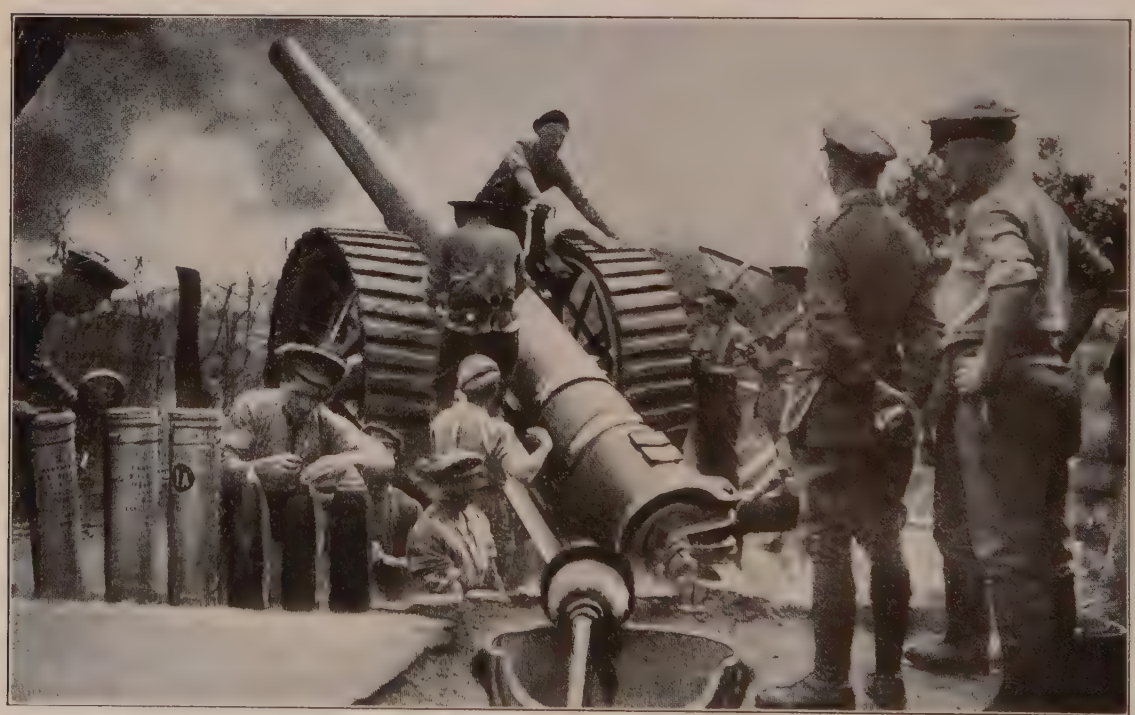
ARTILLERY POSITIONS AND OBSERVATION STATIONS

The light batteries, marked "A," consisting of 3-inch field guns (18-pounder guns and 75-millimetre guns) and howitzers up to 4.5 inches, and the medium batteries, marked "B," of field guns up to 4.5 inches calibre (105-millimetre field guns, 60-pounders, and 155-millimetre howitzers) have their fire directed from observation stations (marked "Obs. sta.") and regulated by airplane observers. The heavy batteries are usually directed by balloon observation and regulated by airplane observation. The batteries are usually placed behind the crest of a hill or under cover of woods and buildings and as often as possible where they can enfilade a part of the enemy's trench, as shown by the second "B" battery from the right, which has the railroad crossing and enemy's trench within range



AN OBSERVATION BALLOON LANDING

The balloons on the map on the opposite page are about two miles from the firing line. In practice they are pushed up as far forward as the control of the air will allow



A HEAVY 6-INCH GUN

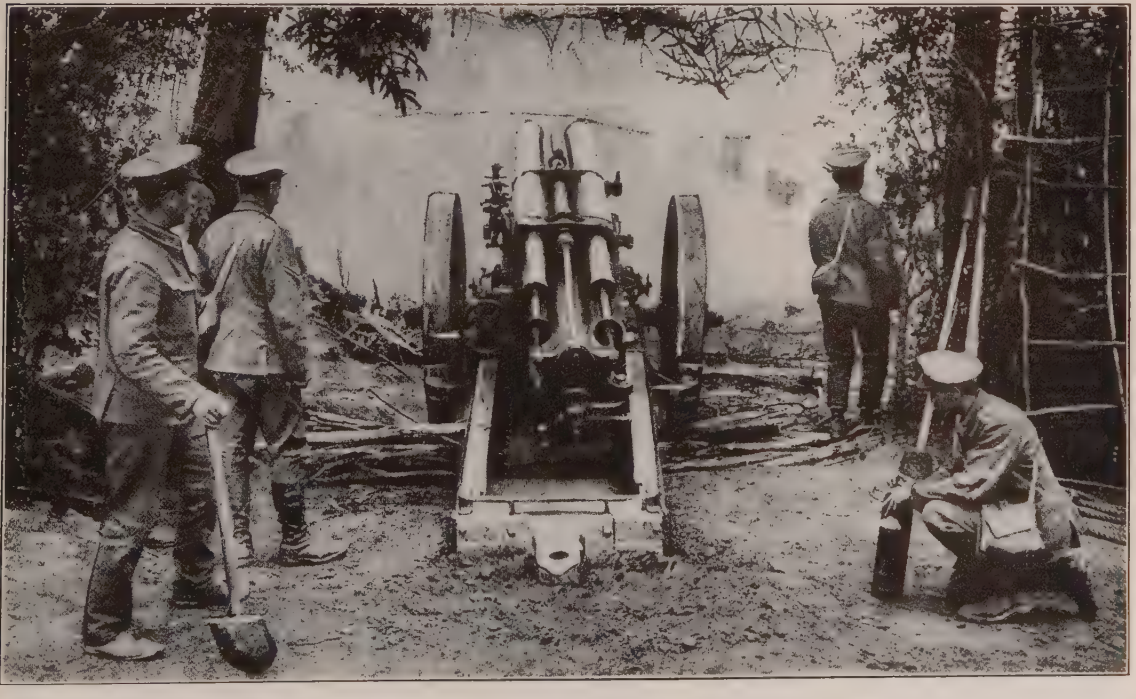
The fire of the heavy guns is chiefly directed by balloon observation. The usual position of the guns is from three to six miles from the enemy first line (see "C," on map on facing page). Their duty is to bombard and destroy supporting points, communications, dugouts, and trenches, and headquarters if it can be located. The effective range of a 6-inch gun is about 15,000 yards



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A LISTENING POST

This papier-maché dead horse is a kind of modern Trojan horse. He proved particularly useful as a listening post for engineers



GUN OF A MEDIUM BATTERY

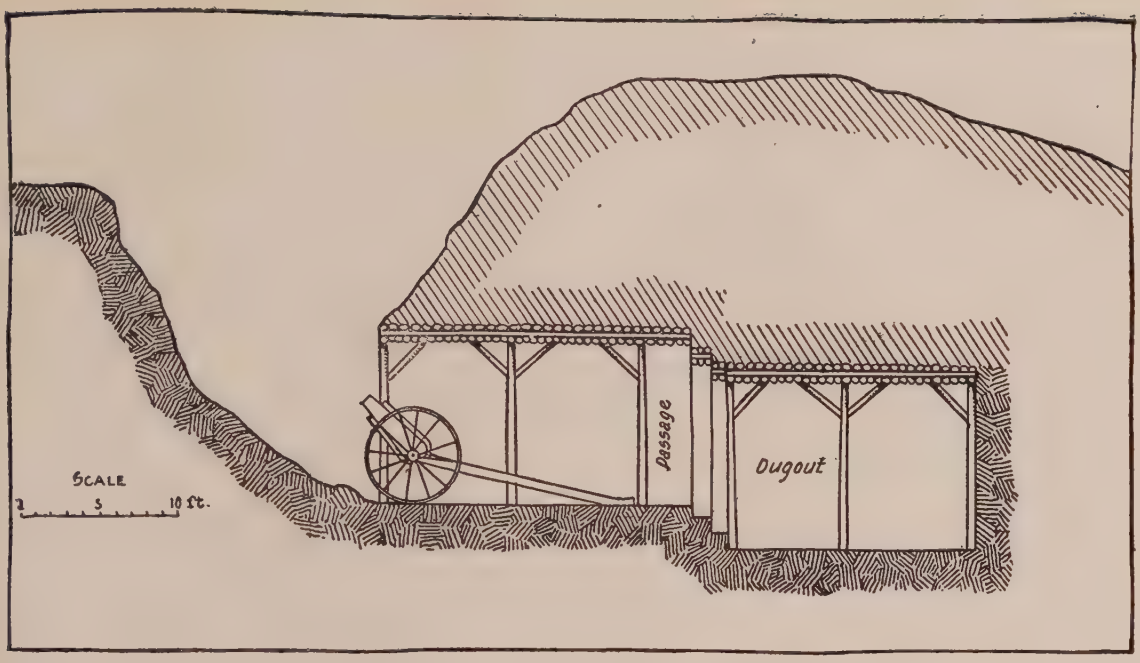
The gunners know the results of their fire only by reports from their observers. Medium batteries ("B" on map, page 219) are located from one to three miles from the enemy, and their task is to help destroy enemy trenches, try to put enemy batteries and captive balloons out of commission, and they are also used in barrage fire to cover attacks



Courtesy British Bureau of Information

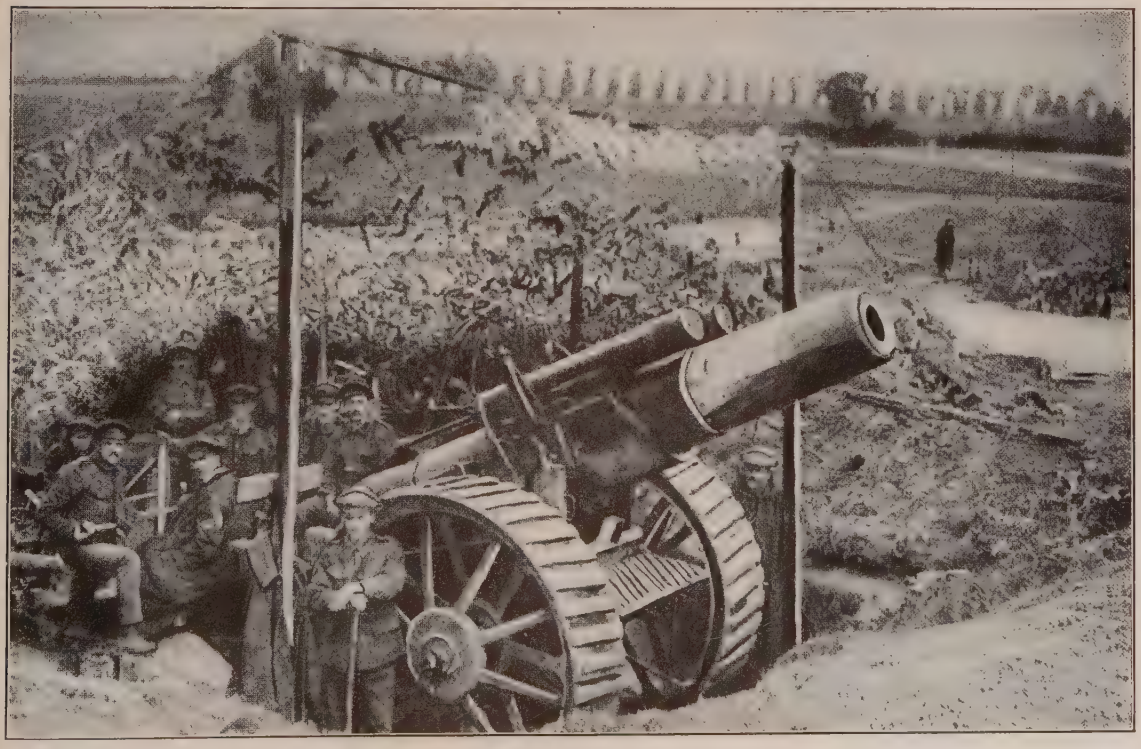
PREPARATIONS FOR A NIGHT ADVENTURE INTO NO MAN'S LAND

These men are getting ready for the night's work. They are taking bombs from their pockets and putting them into their pouches or into Lewis-gun buckets. On the right is an observation officer signalling with a flashlight captured from the Germans



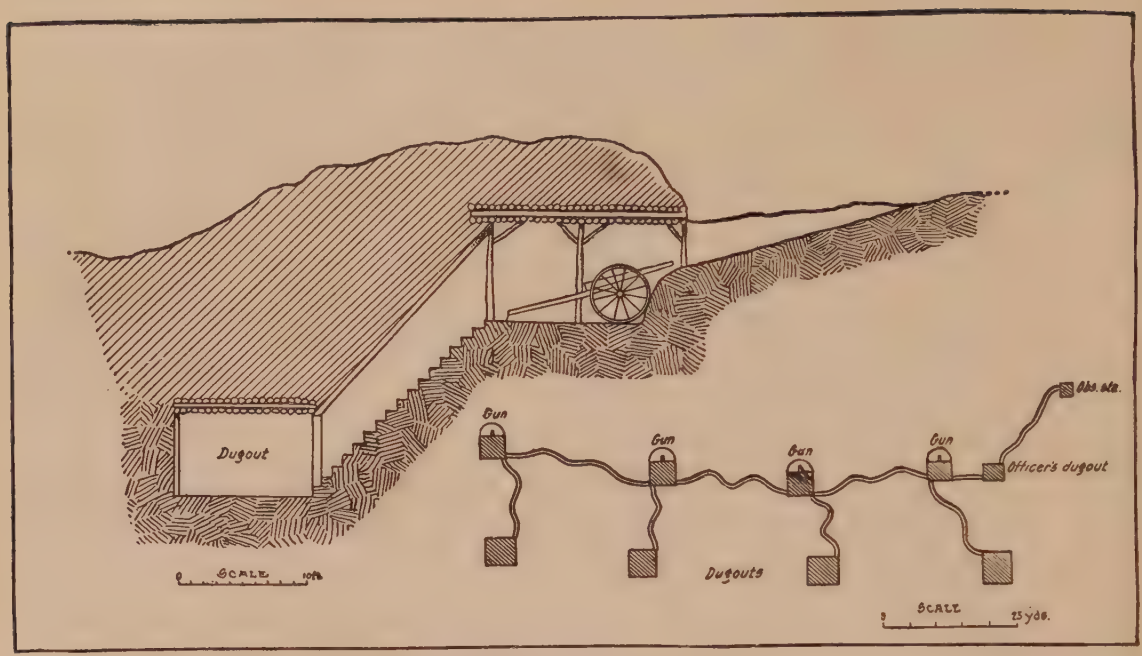
A DIAGRAM OF AN INTRENCHED HOWITZER

A plan often used to conceal and protect both the batteries and the men from enemy observation and fire. The gun crews live in the dugouts in the rear. In many of the gun positions on the map on page 219 this intrenchment would not be necessary, for the batteries and crews are placed in positions sufficiently concealed to protect them



A HEAVY HOWITZER BEING INTRENCHED

Artillerymen engaged in placing a gun in a position like that in the diagram above. The position of this gun, or more particularly of the one above, will explain why it is difficult to move heavy artillery rapidly either to follow up an attack or to escape an advancing enemy



AN INTRENCHED LIGHT BATTERY

A diagram of the protection of each gun and a map of a battery with dugouts for men and officers and communication trenches between and an observation station near by, as shown in the extreme right-hand light battery ("A") on map on page 219



French Official from Committee on Public Information

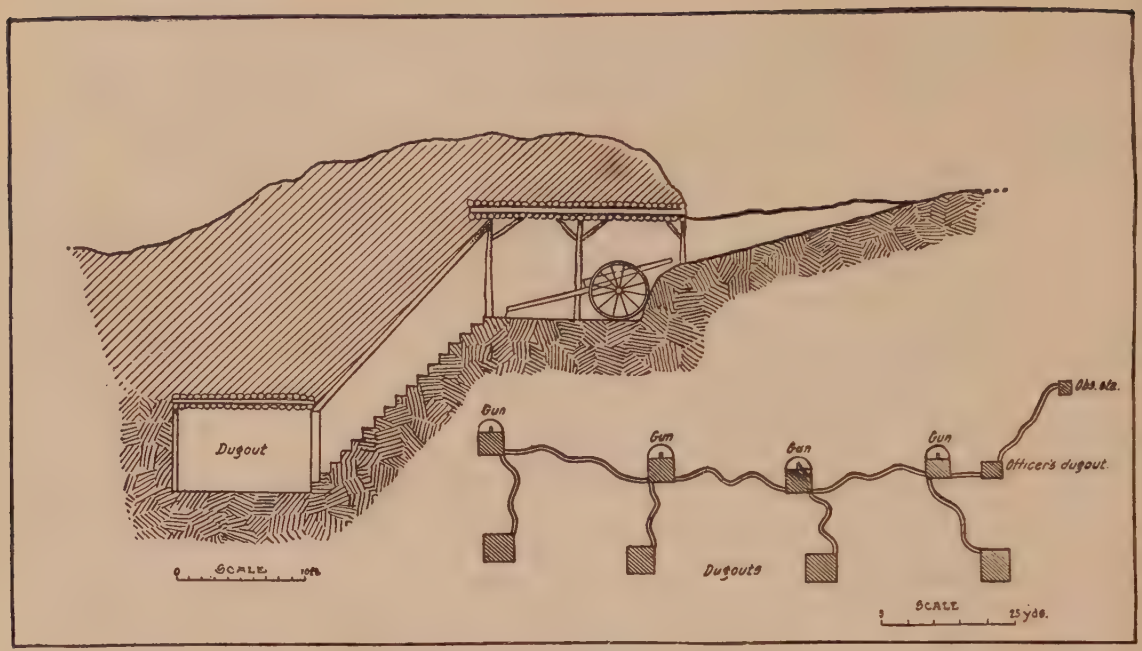
AN INTRENCHED GUN CONCEALED FROM ENEMY AËRIAL OBSERVATION

fensive, enabling Italy to go eastward to the Isonzo and resume preparations for the later attack which captured Gorizia; it drew divisions from France which reduced the German reserves and hastened the day when Verdun attacks would have to be abandoned. Beyond this it accomplished the hitherto-impossible feat of placing the Central Powers upon the defensive on all fronts, a situation not to recur until Foch should regain the offensive in the west, two years later, at the successful Second Battle of the Marne.

In June, 1916, Russia played a loyal and a vital part in the common task of the nations allied against Germany. Her blow was a mighty one and if it raised hopes which the future was to demonstrate were unfounded and proved to be but the prelude to a Russian desertion of the Allied cause, consequent to the collapse of the Russian Empire and the coming of the Bolshevik madness; we have nevertheless to recognize that the blows delivered by Russia against Austria-Hungary were bound to have consequences in the future and that, even dying, Russia dealt a heavy stroke to the endurance of the already-shaken Hapsburg Empire.

In the examination of the Russian campaign of 1916 we approach a great tragedy, one of the greatest tragedies in all human history. It was hidden completely from contemporary vision. The western Allies saw in the return of Russian armies to the offensive the authentic sign of approaching victories. The early successes—coinciding with the first advances of the British and French at the Somme (advances which were presented in a wholly inaccurate light), coinciding with the decline of German effort before Verdun—aroused an optimism, a confidence in London and in Paris, which was not to return for two long, bitter years.

In these capitals the true situation in Russia was unknown. Confused whispers and warning murmurs were silenced by an efficient censorship or a ready unofficial optimism. While Russian armies were advancing the west saw only a restored Russian military establishment. The canker that was eating at the hearts of the Russian masses, the corruption that was corroding official life, the exhaustion which was swiftly becoming complete, economically and morally, these were things that the west did not suspect and the Germans only partially measured.



AN INTRENCHED LIGHT BATTERY

A diagram of the protection of each gun and a map of a battery with dugouts for men and officers and communication trenches between and an observation station near by, as shown in the extreme right-hand light battery ("A") on map on page 219



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Now that the whole truth is known and the bitter disillusionment of the following year is a matter of record, it remains necessary to preserve something of a balance. When Russia abandoned the Allied cause and fell to swift ruin, the deserted Allies found themselves face to face with possible defeat, which, by the spring of 1918, became almost assured disaster. The emotions born of that agony served to eliminate a proper appreciation of what Russia had accomplished on the military side in three campaigns in which Russian armies fought bravely and under a leadership that will continue to command admiration.

Stripped of all detail, Russia in her last offensive literally beat herself to pieces. When the first rush was over she had again, as at the close of the campaign of 1914, exhausted her slender stock of munitions. Her armies sought by the sacrifice of numbers to compensate for the lack of adequate material, for the absence of sufficient guns and munitions. Her victories were won at a price in casualties which could only have been borne by a people in Russia's condition. From the struggle of 1916 Russia sank back exhausted; her generals had served her well, her soldiers had fought in a manner beyond praise, but her rulers had betrayed her, her statesmen had sold her military secrets to the enemy, a corrupt Court gave itself over to the scandals of Rasputin and the intrigues of German coteries. Russian autocracy under the menace of revolution held out its hands to German tyranny. Beyond all else, the unworthy rulers taught the people to hope for defeat as the sure relief from an agony for which there was no other remedy.

The measure of the progressive degeneration of national spirit and national determination is to be found in the fact that the soldiers, who, in the face of untold sacrifice, pressed forward from Volhynia to Rumania in the summer of 1916, fled the same fields, a cowardly and disorganized mob, less than a year later. We have seen in the case of the British Empire how the Irish disaffection led to the tragedy of Easter Week, how a local weakness in the national structure of Britain developed under the strain of war. In the case of Russia the disease was far more deep-seated, far more dangerous. Ever since the domestic disturbances of 1905 had compelled the Russians to make the humiliating Peace of

Portsmouth, the spirit of economic unrest and political revolution had spread and grown. A lost war, a long war; either was bound to be too great a strain upon the shaken edifice of Romanoff power.

Thus, one year after Brusiloff launched his great offensive, Russia collapsed inward. She was incapable of another military effort. This collapse was in some degree due to the strain of the final campaign, to the terrible cost in blood; it was due even more to the strain this campaign put upon the crumbling fabric of economic life. Like a weak bridge under a heavy load, Russia was collapsing when the campaign of 1916 opened, continued to crumble while the campaign progressed, and was in fact a ruin before the campaign had closed, although the fact was still hidden from the western world.

It is with a full recognition of the brutal truths of the Russian situation that we must examine the last Russian offensive. Seen in this light what was at the time recognized to be a fine soldierly achievement becomes something little short of miraculous. Nor should we fail to pay proper tribute to what was accomplished. Had there been no Russian offensive in 1916 the consequences might have been fatal for the Allied cause; had Russia collapsed in this year instead of the next, we might have had the terrible German campaign in the west in 1917 instead of 1918 and the Allies would have been condemned to fight without American help and while Austria was still capable of giving aid and not yet shaken by the long series of disasters which marked the summer months of 1916.

Falling herself, Russia dealt to Austria a blow from which the Hapsburg Monarchy did not recover in the two years and a half of the war.

How different might have been the story if Russian withdrawal in May of 1916 had permitted Austria to send all her strength against Italy, and Germany to concentrate in the west that mighty host which was, two years later, to approach Paris once more and for four months win victory after victory between the Channel and the Marne! Instead, Russia played her part, striking Turkey in Asia Minor and Austria in Galicia and Bukowina, took her high toll of Austrian and

even of German man-power, and fell to anarchy and ruin only when the campaign was over.

Yet, looking backward over the brief time that has elapsed since that summer offensive, it is impossible not to recall mournfully with what high hopes the western world read the daily reports of Russian advances, which approached the gates of Lemberg, reached the slopes of the Carpathians for yet another time, swept through the Bukowina (become the Shenandoah Valley of the Eastern war zone), and finally forced Rumania to the decision which, for a moment, led the west to expect victory and for two years thereafter awakened only sorrow and helpless anger. If one would understand the mood of the western publics in 1917—the confusion, the disillusionment, the temporary halting—it is necessary to recognize how terrible was the fall which between July and December brought Allied hopes from the heights to a Dead Sea level and destroyed confidence and courage alike.

II. RUSSIAN STRATEGY

When the fatal campaign of 1915 came to a close the beaten Russian armies occupied a front from Riga to Rumania, behind the Dwina and the Styr, stretching across the Pripet Marshes and just touching the Austrian frontier far east of Lemberg. The armies themselves were exhausted. They had preserved a semblance of organization, they had survived by retreat, but they were in terrible need of reorganization—of reinforcement; they lacked alike guns and munitions, the loss of trained officers and soldiers had been enormous. Of man-power there was enough, more than enough; the life of the country had been weakened by the enormous drafts made upon the male population in excess of all immediate need, but for the millions, the guns were lacking. Indeed in the terrible retreats unarmed reserves had waited to take the rifles from their fallen comrades and then fill their places in the line.

That Alexieff should have been able to create out of this chaos, and in a period of six months, great armies—armies which were to win memorable victories—must remain a marvellous achievement. Nor was it less amazing that out of such confusion Brusiloff could fashion instruments

which should beat down Austrian military power and push to the very gates of Lemberg. The speed with which Russian military strength was restored deceived the world, as it surprised the German, who had turned westward to Verdun convinced that Russia was finished as a foe.

Yet long before the campaign of 1916 opened in Europe there came from Asia Minor in February an authentic sign of Russian strength. On February 16 the great Turkish fortress of Erzerum fell to the Grand Duke Nicholas and a few weeks later Russian armies entered Trebizond and completed the conquest of Turkish Armenia. Other Russian troops pressed southward seeking to effect a junction with the doomed British already immured in Kut. Thus early a blow—and a heavy blow—was struck one of Germany's allies and Turkish conditions were unmistakably critical again in this period.

The Erzerum episode was necessarily minor, another side show—cheering but of small value, since the fate of Asia was still to be determined in Europe and on the battle-lines east and west of the solid block of the Central Powers. And, so far as Russia was concerned, the operative front was to be the three hundred miles between the Pripet Marshes at Pinsk and the Rumanian frontier east of Czernowitz. Two groups of Russian armies north of Pripet, commanded by Evarts and Kuropatkin, were to make various feints and even attempt considerable operations of a subordinate character, destined to come to nothing but to hold a certain number of German troops immobilized. The main task was that of Brusiloff to the south.

Russian strategy envisaged three objectives. It was necessary to act in order to remove the pressure now being exerted by the Germans upon the French at Verdun and by the Austrians upon the Italians in Venetia. The whole Russian campaign was to conform to the general Allied conception of a concentric offensive to be delivered by all the Allies upon the Central Powers; by the Anglo-French forces at the Somme, by the Italians at the Isonzo, and by Brusiloff's Russian armies in Volhynia and Galicia. The major strategical purpose of the Russians was, however, to crush the Austro-Hungarian military power, mainly concentrated on the southeastern front.

As the campaign progressed the attention of the world was fixed upon certain geographical points—upon Kovel, Lemberg, and Stanislau, upon the capital of Galicia above all else—but although the possession of these was of utmost value to Brusiloff, their importance lay solely in the extent to which their capture of the towns would contribute to the destruction of the enemy's military establishment, to breaking his morale and his military strength. The campaign of Brusiloff was not conceived in relation to any fixed geographical objectives; his purpose was to attack upon a very wide front, to exploit successes when they had come, and to use the last ounce of power in his grasp to put Austria once and for all out of the war. The fate of Austria once more turned upon a Russian campaign, and once more Austria was to be saved, after deadly peril, only by German intervention. Thus the campaign of 1916 was to recall vividly the issues and circumstances of the earlier operation over much the same territory in 1915; it was to hold out the same promises and to end in even greater disappointments, after preliminary successes rivalling those of the former year.

III. BATTLEFIELD AND ARMIES

On the front from Pripet to Rumania five Austrian armies faced four Russian. The Austrian armies from north to south were: the First, under Puhallo; the Fourth, under the Archduke Joseph Ferdinand; the Second, under Boehm-Ermoli; an Austro-German Army, which was mainly Austrian, under Von Bothmer; and the Sixth, under Pflanzer-Baltin. Facing them were: the Eighth Russian Army, under Kaledin; the Eleventh, under Sakharoff; the Seventh, under Scherbachoff; and the Ninth, under Lechitsky. Still another Russian army, under Loesche, was to appear on the north between Pripet and the bend of the Styr, after the first offensive had driven its deep wedge toward Kovel.

Of the five Austrian armies only two were fatally involved in the first phase of the Russian offensive: that of the Archduke facing Rovno, occupying the fortresses of Dubno and Lutsk and covering the vital railroad junction of Kovel, which became the geographical objective of

Kaledin in June; and that of Pflanzer, defending Bukowina from the Dniester to the Rumanian boundary on the Pruth. Both of these armies were substantially destroyed and the Archduke Joseph Ferdinand was replaced by a German general, Von Linsingen, when German reserves were sent to save the day. It was the steadfast resistance of the army of Bothmer which actually saved the situation in all the critical period of June and July, by covering Lemberg and holding fast when the armies on either flank crumbled.

As to numbers engaged the Austrians, with small German contingents, had, when the battle opened, some forty-one divisions, rather more than 600,000 men. The Russians were at least three times as strong. As the struggle progressed the numbers were somewhat equalized by the arrival of Austrian troops recalled from Italy and German troops sent from France, but throughout the campaign the Russian advantage was very great in numbers, although after the first months this advantage was counterbalanced by the familiar exhaustion of Russian munitions.

The three hundred miles of front on which the campaign was fought extended from the marshes and lowlands about Pripet southward across the higher ground of eastern Galicia and presently to the Carpathian Mountains at Kimpolung. The Russians, advancing from east to west, had to cross a number of considerable rivers, flowing from south to north and from north to south—notably the Styr and the Stakhod in Volhynia and the Sereth and the Strypa in Galicia; they had also to force a passage of the Dniester and the Pruth on the frontiers of Bukowina. They were handicapped at all times by the scarcity of roads and railroads and, in the north, by the marshy nature of much of the country.

On this front, more than half as extensive as that between Switzerland and the sea, the Austrians had not constructed defences rivalling the German systems at the Somme. For these the distances were too great. Over much of the front there were no continuous trenches and behind the first lines were no such switch lines and second and third systems of defences as had been revealed at the Battle of Champagne and were again to be disclosed at the Somme. Yet even on this front

open warfare of the old-fashioned sort was not to take place on any large scale. Driven from one system of defences the Austrians were presently to be found behind hastily constructed trenches, before which the fury of Russian advance was checked in due course of time.

During the Russian advances, the railway junctions of Kovel, Lemberg, and Stanislau came to have an extraordinary value. Could the Russians have taken Kovel they would have broken the connection between German and Austrian armies; could they have taken Lemberg they would have paralyzed all Austrian connections in Galicia; the value of Stanislau was less considerable but it was unmistakable. But while these railway points remained in their hands, the Austrians were able to move reserves from one point to another with the greatest ease, while the Kovel-Brest-Litovsk line insured the arrival of German reinforcements at critical moments. Of these three junctions the more important, Kovel and Lemberg, were never lost during this campaign, and the Austrians were therefore at all times infinitely better off, both in the matter of trunk and lateral communications, and were thus enabled to use a smaller number of men to a far greater advantage than their foes, whose ultimate failure may, in some measure at least, be traced to the poverty of communications. Stanislau was finally captured, but the consequences were slight.

IV. JUNE 5

Turning now to the actual progress of events: the first warning of the coming storm reached the Austrians on June 4, when the Russians began a deliberate bombardment of their lines from Pripet to Rumania. It was not a concentrated fire like that which struck the French before Verdun or which had overwhelmed the Russians themselves at the Dunajec the previous year. An attack on so wide a front, too, was a novelty in the war, for hitherto the widest front assailed had been the twenty-mile stretch along the Dunajec. By contrast the Russians swept three hundred miles.

The following day all five Austrian armies were assailed by Russian

THE RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE IN JUNE, 1916



BLACK SHOWS GROUND GAINED.

infantry in one of the greatest battles of the war. The results of this grandiose attack varied along the front, quite as was to be expected. From the Pripet Marshes right down to Kolki in the bend of the Styr there was no marked Russian gain. Below Kolki, on the other hand, as far as the Galician frontier, there was a material gain, which in the centre developed into the piercing of the Austrian front by Kaledin's

army at half a dozen points, notably at Olika, due west of Rovno, and the immediate inrush of the Russian flood.

In the next few days this flood swept forward fifty miles. Dubno and Lutsk—which, with Rovno (never lost by the Russians), constituted the Volhynian triangle of fortresses—were promptly taken; the Styr was passed, and Kaledin's army approached both Kovel and Vladimir-Volynski, road and railroad junctions of utmost importance. By the end of the first week a wedge over forty miles deep, and twice as wide at its base, had been driven into the Austrian front between the bend of the Styr at Kolki and the old Austrian frontier northeast of Brody. More than 70,000 prisoners had been taken from the army of the Archduke Joseph Ferdinand, which had been routed and had fled westward toward Kovel.

While the Austrian armies in the centre, those of Boehm-Ermoli and Bothmer, had suffered only local reverses, the fate of the Archduke's army had also overtaken that of Pflanzer and it had been driven in rout southward through Bukowina—which was totally cleared—into the Carpathians and westward along the Dniester upon Stanislau. In its first resistance it had lost more than 40,000 prisoners and had practically ceased to exist as an army.

By the middle of June the situation had become critical. Unless the beaten Austrians were promptly reinforced, a gap was sure to open between Austrian and German armies, when the Russians reached Kovel; the advance of Lechitsky south of the Dniester was threatening Lemberg from the south, while that of Sakharoff was becoming equally menacing from the north along the Lemberg-Rovno railroad toward Brody. Only in the centre and before the army of Bothmer were the Russians checked, and Bothmer's position was becoming perilous, since both his flanks were threatened. On the map his situation had already become impossible, but owing to the character of the country he was able to hold on for many weeks and ultimately make good his retirement.

In this situation German intervention was rapid and efficient. While the Archduke's routed army streamed back to Kovel, German

divisions were hurried down along the railways from Poland and the Russian front; a new army was created, and the defeated Archduke deprived of all but nominal authority. By the third week in June the Germans were counter-attacking on the northern side of the Russian wedge, driven toward Kovel, and in the next few days the counter-attack achieved its purpose. The Russian advance was first checked, then thrown back a small distance. The peril to Kovel was abolished and time was allowed the Germans to reorganize the defences in this quarter. When these reorganizations were completed, ground would be surrendered to a new Russian drive, made to the north of the salient, and the Russian advance would reach the Stakhod from the Pripet Marshes southward; but not again during the campaign would Kovel be in danger.

Rarely has a German stroke been more skilfully delivered or more promptly and completely successful. It did not achieve as much as the Germans had hoped for it; neither Dubno nor Lutsk was retaken; substantially all the ground gained by the Russians was either retained or presently recaptured, but the German counter-offensive did break the force of the Russian thrust in the direction of Kovel. In doing this Linsinger accomplished for the Germans what Ivanoff strove to accomplish at the San in the previous year, when, after the defeat of the Dunajec, he strove to stabilize the whole front at the San River. Had Linsingen failed as Ivanoff had failed, the dislocation of the Austro-German lines would certainly have extended northward into Poland and a general German retirement might have resulted.

V. THE END OF THE FIRST PHASE

By the end of June the first phase of the Russian offensive was over. More than 200,000 prisoners and 200 cannon had been taken, together with an enormous booty in material and supplies. A large portion of the Russian province of Volhynia had been cleared; all of the Bukowina had been reoccupied or was destined soon to be taken. The German counter-offensive east of Kovel had been halted and was manifestly on the wane. Loesche's army, brought south, was already preparing to advance north of Kaledin's salient, and the ultimate retirement of the Ger-

mans to the line of the Stakhod was plainly forecast. To the south, Sakharoff's army was advancing up the Styr and astride the Lemberg-Rovno railroad; it was almost at the frontier and within striking distance of the considerable frontier town of Brody. Scherbachoff's army was less successful and had made only minor progress against Bothmer, west of Tarnapol; but on both sides of the river Lechitsky was pushing up the Dniester Valley; was approaching Kolomea, had taken Czernowitz, and was threatening Stanislau and—beyond it—the vital railroad communications between Lemberg and Hungary. Actually the Russians were now nearer to Lemberg than they had been to the front which they now held in Volhynia, facing Kovel, when they had begun their great offensive a little more than three weeks earlier.

By comparison with what the British and French were to accomplish in the next four months at the Somme, the Russians' achievement was already colossal. The attack had been a surprise to the foe; this surprise—a factor not to appear effectively on the west front until the great German offensive of 1918—had enabled them to break through at a number of points on the Volhynian front, to break through as no western offensive prior to that of Ludendorff in 1918 was to break through, and, following the initial piercing, the victorious Russians had covered nearly fifty miles before they were checked.

This was assuredly a marvellous reversal of form after the long and terrible months of disaster in the previous year and the retreats that seemed to have no ending. Yet there were signs—which the Germans recognized and promptly reported—signs which should have had a warning for the western powers, but had no meaning. If Russia had inflicted terrible losses upon the Austrians, the method of her generals had imposed upon her troops colossal sacrifices. Long before the campaign had reached its climax German statements fixed the Russian losses in killed alone at 264,000, which was far above the total of captured Austrians and indicated that the total of Russian losses was above a million.

Moreover, great as had been the immediate success, it had not resulted in the sweeping advances of 1914. Bothmer stood on the ground

over which Brusiloff himself had advanced in the first considerable battle of the eastern front, and the result of that earlier battle had been an Austrian defeat and the evacuation of Lemberg. A single defeat in August and September, two years earlier, had sufficed to turn the Austrians out of eastern Galicia as far as the San. But the later Austrian disaster, great as it was, had not produced a general dislocation of the Austrian front. The old story of the warfare of positions had been reproduced on the grand scale of eastern operations. The victorious Russians had outrun their guns and their supplies, the routed Austrians had retired upon guns and German reinforcements; a balance had presently been restored and the Russian advance pinned down—thrown back slightly.

And in point of fact this Russian check was as fatal to the main Russian purposes as the check which Ludendorff suffered—two years later in his Picardy offensive of March—was to the German purpose to seek a decision by a single blow. Brusiloff had borrowed the German strategy, the Napoleonic tradition. He had sought to crush the Austrian armies and he had dealt them a terrific blow, but the blow just lacked the weight which would insure a decision. When next he struck he would find German divisions along his front and German generals in command of the opposing armies.

Thus, while London and Paris were once more acclaiming the Russian "steam roller" marvellously restored to efficiency and this time setting out not for Berlin or Vienna but for the more modest objective of Lemberg, the real opportunity was passing—had, in, fact passed; the Russian offensive was assuming the familiar and the fatal character of so many western offensives which had opened with bright hopes and material initial success only to end in dismal slaughter and unmistakable check when the effort was made to exploit them after the first hours of success.

VI. THE RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE SLOWS DOWN

We have now briefly to summarize the further phases of the Russian offensive, to narrate how it gradually lost power and slowed down, spent

its resources and its energies. There was no defeat, there was not even a positive check along the whole front. Armies continued to advance, ground was still gained right up to September, when the Rumanian entrance into the struggle transformed the whole situation; but from July onward the larger possibilities had vanished. By this time the German intervention was becoming effective. German generals and German divisions were appearing along the whole front.

In this period German strategy—for it was German strategy that dominated—did not seek an offensive victory. As at the Somme, the Germans sought only to make the price of advance prohibitive and to wear out the force of the still superior opposing numbers, before the Russians should reach Lemberg or Kovel. Between these towns and the front as it existed on July 1 the Germans were prepared to surrender a certain amount of ground; to hold both these railroad centres was, however, a fixed purpose.

Russian strategy had aimed at the destruction of the Austrian armies. But after the first attack this was no longer possible. On the contrary, it became necessary for Brusiloff, before he could resume a general offensive, to reorganize his own front. He had created in the enemy line two enormous pockets—one along the Styr in Volhynia, the other in the Bukowina—two pockets strikingly recalling those which were the consequence of Ludendorff's mighty offensives in Picardy and Champagne two years later. But these pockets or salients were vulnerable to attacks on the flank, as the German counter-offensive from Kovel had demonstrated, and Brusiloff's first task was to straighten his front, to bring it into line with points of the wedges he had driven into the Austrian line in June. In the main, he accomplished this in July and August; but, in doing it, he consumed the time and the resources which were needed for a new general attack. And as a consequence this attack never came; it was attempted one year later, in the pathetic Kerensky offensive which, despite its forlorn failure, began with victory, but, because it was not pressed, promptly collapsed.

The first and most obvious duty was to establish the safety of that great wedge driven toward Kovel, now rather less than twenty-five

miles distant from the Russian front. Its weakness was demonstrated by the German counter-offensive from the north, delivered in June, and again outlined by a second counter-offensive prepared at the south, in front of Sakharoff's army, but never delivered because it was forestalled by a Russian thrust.

Accordingly, in the first days of July, Loesche's army, brought south from the region north of Pripet Marsh, attacked on a front from the bend of the Styr to Kolki, broke down the Austrian defences, crossed the Styr, and carried the whole Russian line forward in a straight line from the point of the Kovel wedge to the marsh. Finally checked at the crossings of the Stakhod River it did not pause until it had accomplished the main purpose. The Lutsk salient was ironed out on the north; the rear and flank of Kaledin was assured against a new thrust from the north. In point of fact, Kaledin was able to get forward and retake the ground lost in mid-June, but was promptly pulled down before he had again threatened Kovel. And with this operation the campaign for Kovel ends. Kaledin and Loesche have done their work, they must wait for the armies to the south to complete theirs, and this work will not be completed when the campaign ends.

Having straightened his front to the north about the Lutsk salient, Brusiloff in mid-July turns to the southern side of the salient along the Upper Styr, where the Germans and Austrians are preparing a new counter-offensive designed to retake Dubno and Lutsk and turn the southern flank of Kaledin. In a series of brilliant offensives Sakharoff pushes down the Rovno-Lemberg railway, defeats the army of Boehm-Ermoli, takes more than fifty thousand prisoners, and presently captures Brody and arrives on the northern flank of Bothmer's army, which is standing like Thomas at Chickamauga, standing behind the Strypa facing Tarnopol—a rock on which all the German strategy in this eastern field is founded. More than this, the Sakharoff advance draws close to the Tarnopol-Lemberg railway, which is vital to the existence of Bothmer's northern wing. In July, however, Bothmer still holds on.

Brusiloff has thus secured his northern positions. Now his line runs practically straight from Pripet to Brody, along the Stakhod and

the Upper Styr. He threatens Bothmer's left flank along the Brody-Lemberg railway, but on this front and southward Bothmer's position is too strong to be forced by frontal attack. Accordingly, it is the turn of Lechitsky, astride the Dniester and already victorious in the Bukowina, to push up the middle Dniester. When he has advanced to Stanislau and approached Halicz, he will have turned Bothmer's southern flank, and Bothmer, with both flanks turned, will have no choice but to retire toward Lemberg, behind the Zlota Lipa or even the Gnila Lipa, where Brusiloff found and routed the Austrian armies in September, 1914. Once Bothmer is in retreat, then the road to Lemberg should be open.

But it is only in August that Lechitsky can get into motion, the heavy rains bringing the rivers up to a flood stage. August 7 Lechitsky sets out. He is in Stanislau on August 10, while Scherbachoff to the north, advancing in line, gives him aid north of the Dniester, and the vital crossings and roads on Bothmer's flank are by this date lost to the general, who has made such a long and gallant fight in his first positions. As a result Bothmer at last gets up and retires behind the Zlota Lipa, in good order, with only a moderate amount of losses in guns and prisoners. By the second week in August he is in his new position, having postponed his withdrawal for ten priceless weeks and thus prevented Brusiloff from reaping immediate rewards for his great successes north and south.

We have then, by the middle of August, this situation: From Pripet right down to the Dniester and thence to the Carpathians the Russian line has been pushed forward from thirty to fifty miles; Kovel is hardly twenty miles away, Lemberg only a little more. Twenty thousand square miles of territory, 300,000 prisoners, and an immense booty in supplies have been gathered in. German divisions have been drawn from France, Austrian divisions from Italy; a terrific strain has been put upon the resources of the Central Powers and it still seems possible, now that the whole Russian front has been brought forward, that another general attack may bring the Czar to Lemberg and insure the reconquest of Eastern Galicia.



From a painting by Lieut. Henri Farré. Courtesy of the artist

CAPTAIN BONE DOWNING A BOCHE

A remarkable exploit of Captain Bone, one of the well known British airmen. Perceiving an enemy airplane coming to drop bombs on houses near the shore, he gave chase, overtook it, and sent it plunging down into the sea.

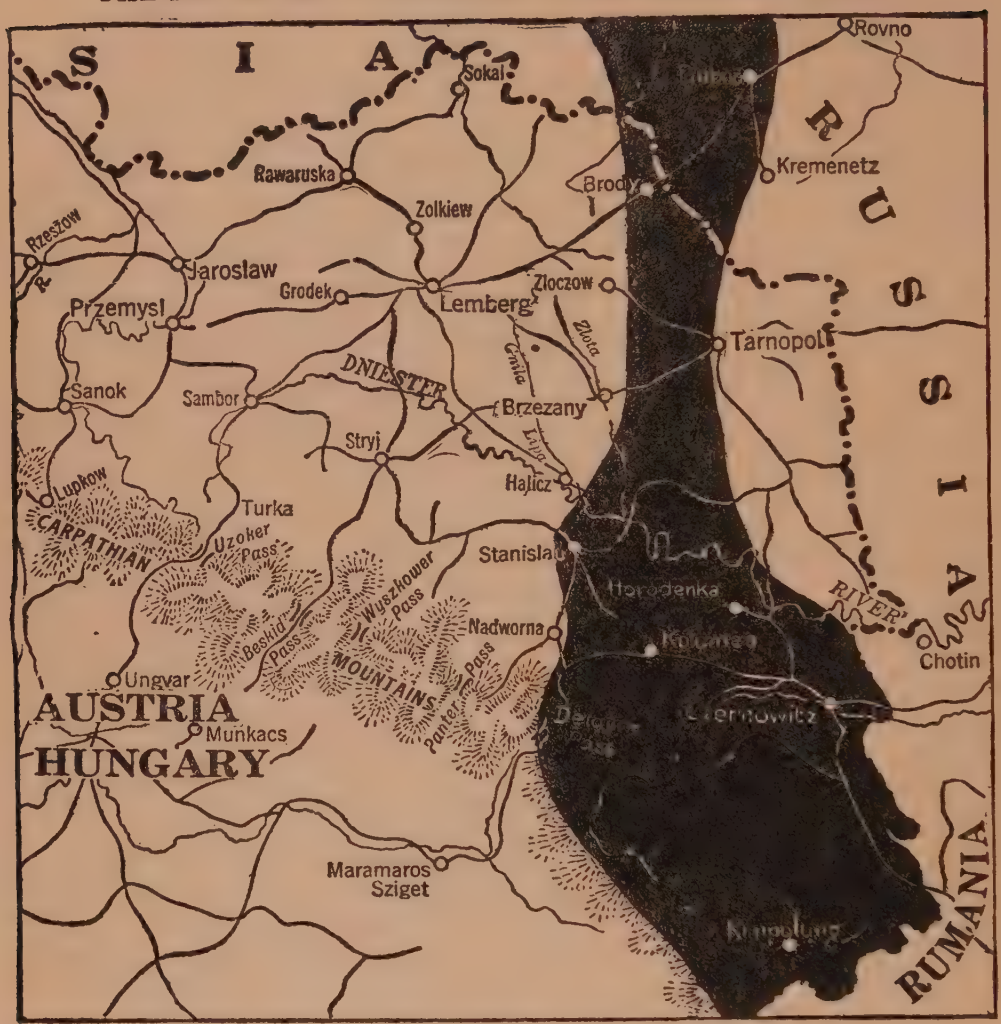
VII. THE END

After August 15, the story of Brusiloff's offensive is briefly told. For three weeks there is a desperate struggle between Scherbachoff and Bothmer north of the Dniester and the Austrian is pushed back slightly on both flanks, straight in upon Halicz to the south, but manages, with the aid of German divisions, to hold on. The Russian effort wears out and the whole Russian offensive from Pripet to the Dniester is over. Meantime Lechitsky has been diverted from his operations up the Dniester and, in accord with Scherbachoff, by the entrance of Rumania, and the necessity of covering the flank of the Rumanian army along the Carpathians, while that army is still invading Transylvania.

Lechitsky's earlier successes in sweeping the Bukowina had enabled Rumania to concentrate her efforts on the west instead of the north; indeed, without this reconquest of the Bukowina, the Rumanian entrance into the war might not have occurred; but the moment Rumania did enter, Russian attention was diverted from Galicia to the Bukowina and presently Russian divisions were, all too tardily, sent to support an ally, overcome in the first weeks of the war. Had Rumania not entered the war it is conceivable—just conceivable—that Brusiloff, by concentrating all his armies and all his remaining resources upon a final drive at Lemberg, might have taken the city. But this is merest speculation; in any event, after September 1 this was no longer a possibility. His campaign had, moreover, lost its original value.

And thus in September and in October the last Russian offensive eventually wears itself out. Rumanian events fill the newspapers and banish the minor incidents of the Russian offence. All the larger hopes of June and even of July perish. Despite great early victories and continued progress, Russian resources have proven inadequate for the task set by Russian strategy. Austrian armies have been shaken, desperately shaken, but German reserves and German generals have restored the balance. Russia has received even more deadly wounds than she has inflicted, and the territory which has been conquered in

THE ADVANCE ON LEMBERG, JUNE–SEPTEMBER, 1916



BLACK SHOWS GROUND GAINED

the brilliant campaign will have no value in the future—will be surrendered to Austria almost without a struggle in the next summer.

Recalling the prompt Austrian collapse in the first days of Kerensky's despairing offensive of the next year, it is not too much to say that had Russia been able to exploit her victories of 1916 by a campaign of 1917, Lemberg would have fallen promptly and Eastern Galicia have been cleared as promptly as it had been in 1914. As he ended his campaign Brusiloff stood in advantageous positions from Pripet

to the Carpathians. Another winter of preparation like the previous one would assure him of sufficient resources to make a new drive as great as that of the preceding June, and such a drive would have carried him, victorious, into Lemberg for a second time.

But all of this was not to be. The Russian army had fought its last campaign. It closed that campaign victoriously and with the prize for which it had contended well within its grasp. After four campaigns Austria was only capable of a limited further resistance, made possible by German aid. In September, 1916, every outward sign pointed to the collapse, not of the Romanoff but of the Hapsburg Empire. Even the disaster to Rumania seemed but a passing incident to be repaired, when Russia was again ready to move in the spring. But at work behind the victorious armies of Brusiloff were treason of the Court and autocracy and the anarchy of the Bolsheviki. We leave the Russian army in the autumn of 1916 still a powerful, organized, disciplined force; we shall find it in the spring of 1917 a mob, destitute of discipline, courage, loyalty. It was destined to disappear, not like Napoleon's Grand Army in a defeat made glorious by the valour and devotion of the vanquished, but in a flight from a field on which it was still actually victorious and from which it had driven its opponents.

For all practical purposes Brusiloff's campaign is over by the middle of September, the operations of Lechitsky in the Carpathians have become a detail in the Rumanian campaign to the south.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

RUMANIA IS SACRIFICED

I

THE BATTLE OF EUROPE

On August 27 Rumania declared war upon the Central Powers and her first troops crossed the Austrian frontier. By September 1 her army was at work and the decisive moment arrived in that grandiose struggle, unequalled in extent and numbers engaged, which had already been described on both sides of the firing lines as the Battle of Europe.

Before passing to a discussion of the political and military circumstances of the Rumanian episode, it is necessary to consider for a moment the exact situation as it existed on September 1, 1916. For two years no such season of hope and eager expectation of victory was to come again to the nations allied against Germany. At this precise moment Allied confidence and Allied calculations were at the highest level they had reached since the opening of the conflict. Looking backward now over the grim and bitter days that were soon to come, Allied optimism and blindness in this September period seem almost unbelievable.

Yet they are not inexplicable. The Germans and the Austrian allies had undertaken two great offensives: Verdun in February, and the Trentine adventure in May. Both had long ago been checked. Verdun had now become as patent a failure as the Venetian effort. The German and Austrian failures had been in turn followed by great Allied offensives, and at the moment Rumania entered the war the Somme campaign was developing into a real success; Haig was at last sweeping up and over the Ridge between Albert and Bapaume; Brusiloff was still advancing both in Volhynia and in Galicia; in the Bukowina his troops were forcing the last barriers of the Carpathian passes. Along the Isonzo Italy had taken Gorizia, was still victorious in the present, and

apparently capable of making still further progress in the immediate future.

In the west, Bapaume and Péronne were to all appearances almost within Anglo-French grasp; in the south, Italian hands seemed closing on Trieste; in the east, Lemberg and Kovel were universally regarded as certain fruits of the next Russian harvest—soon to be gathered. Far down in the Balkans Sarrail's army was giving sure signs of an impending offensive. Not only was the Battle of Europe in progress but on all sides Germany and Austria were being assailed—were on the defensive and were threatened by disasters and defeats which seemed certain to arrive at no distant date and bring with them the authentic evidence that the Central Powers had lost the war.

September 1, 1916, was one of the great moments of the war; it was a moment when Paris, London, and Rome were already convinced that decisive victory was at hand. Only in Petrograd was there a suspicion of the truth, and what was going on in Petrograd, vital as it was to the whole Allied cause, was totally unknown in all other Allied capitals. Now as we must understand the Allied mood in September, 1916, when Rumania brought a new front and a new army to the campaign, it is equally essential that we should see facts as contrasted with appearances —the facts out of which was now to develop one of the grimmest tragedies of the war (comparable only with the Belgian episode), namely, the destruction of Rumania and, as a consequence, a decline in Allied confidence and morale, which opened the way to the German peace offensive of December.

The fact, as contrasted with appearances, was this: Despite material gains, the Somme offensive had failed to pierce the German line and was destined in part at least, because of weather conditions, to continue to fail—to remain nothing more than a pounding operation, enormously costly to both contestants but without chance of a decisive issue. The Italian offensive at Gorizia was over. The Russian offensive in the east had already been checked and was now dying out. Brusiloff, like Cadorna, had exhausted his resources and in exhausting them he had missed a decisive victory. The gains on the west, the east, and the Italian

fronts were relatively unimportant; they had no decisive value. On all fronts the enemy armies remained intact, and behind the enemy lines the hostile nations stood with unshaken confidence and unbroken morale.

The Rumanian enlistment was hailed in all Allied quarters as destined to prove the final and decisive action; the intervention of a powerful reserve which, at the moment when the issue of the Battle of Europe was to be determined, would fall upon the exhausted armies of the Central Powers and produce what Napoleon was accustomed to call "the event." But the truth is that Rumania, led into the war by Russian treachery, was already marked as a victim, both by the reactionary elements in control in Russia and by their partners in the conspiracy, the German General Staff.

Actually the Rumanian army was used as the reserve of the Allies. It was thrown in at the moment regarded as likely to be decisive, but it was thrown against an unshaken enemy, still strong in reserves, who was able to break the attacking reserve, throw it back in utter ruin, advance and win the Battle of Europe, and, thus, the military and the moral advantage of the campaign of 1916. We have now come to the decisive moment. It is of utmost importance now to lay aside any limited view of the battlefield, to dismiss any estimate of the relative value of the separate spheres of operations, to see the thing as a unit—as a single battle—and to recognize that it was because the Germans saw the situation in the single and unified fashion that they won the battle, the campaign, and—almost—the war itself.

If one should go back to the Civil War for a parallel—always tempting and always dangerous—the situation in the Battle of Europe in the opening days of September was the situation of Gettysburg on the third day, and the onset of the Rumanians was like the charge of Pickett's troops. In both instances an undefeated enemy was assailed in his chosen positions, precisely as he had hoped to be assailed; and in each case the assault failed. As a consequence, the assailants were compelled to abandon their whole strategy, which sought a decision in the campaign. And in the case of the European struggle, the victors—unlike Meade at Gettysburg—passing to the offensive in their own turn, har-

vested great profits from their victory, in territory, prisoners, and in the moral values which, in the existing situation, were of far greater importance.

The cause of the Rumanian failure is to be found in Russian treachery, in the treason of the ministry of Stuermer and Protopopoff. They deliberately planned that Rumania should attack and be destroyed, that Russia might obtain peace—the peace of the vanquished, but without decisive defeat of her own armies—and that thus the domestic revolution, already visible to them, might be averted and the soldiers at the front be turned against the Russian people in a desperate effort to suppress the insurrection, bound to come if the war were protracted through another winter. Yet, recognizing all this, what is to be said of the blindness of Allied statesmanship, which permitted the terrible tragedy to occur without suspecting a single minor circumstance of it?

II. THE POLICY OF NATIONAL INSTINCT

The reasons which underlay Rumania's entrance into the war, the larger impelling motives, are easily explained. Rumania enlisted with the nations fighting the Central Powers for precisely the reasons that Sardinia had allied herself with France and then with Prussia in the last century. In both cases the Italians sought to free portions of their own race and areas of territory inhabited by Italians and which belonged by all rights—based upon race, language, and common national aspiration —to a united Italy.

In the same fashion Rumanian patriots pursued a policy which one of the most distinguished Rumanian statesman, M. Take Jonescu, defined as the policy of national instinct. In the Bukowina, Transylvania, and Banat more than 4,000,000 Rumanians lived under the harsh yoke of Austrian and Hungarian rulers. The claim of Italy to Venetia was no more valid than that of Rumania to Transylvania, and just as Italy was indefensible, while Austria held the Venetian passes, Rumania was condemned to exist as a pliant tool of the Central Alliance while the Austrians maintained their sway in the southern half of Bukowina and the Hungarians continued to hold Transylvania.

And in these regions of Rumania Irredenta Austro-Hungarian rule had been consistently brutal and inhuman. All the hideous circumstances of Austrian oppression in Northern Italy in the middle of the Nineteenth Century, which had stirred Europe and even America, were repeated in the unfortunate lands about the Transylvania Alps. It was not mere land hunger or grandiose and selfish ambition that led the Rumanians to enter the war. They sought territorial aggrandizement, yes; but they sought it only to obtain that race unification which was equally desired by the Rumanians of Austrian and Hungarian provinces alike. Left to themselves, the inhabitants of the Bukowina, of Transylvania, and of large sections of the Banat would have chosen the Rumanian nationality. They were held by Austrian and Hungarian bayonets; they were held as the Italians of Lombardy and Venetia had been held more than half a century before, as the people of Trieste and the Trentino were still held when Italy entered the war for reasons wholly comparable to those which later led Rumania to the fatal decision.

The facts of the Rumanian situation were little understood in the west, where the accession of Rumania was hailed merely because the new ally brought half a million bayonets and was believed to bring the decisive aid which would win the victory. When Rumania had failed, after the most shameful betrayal in modern history, the Germans skilfully covered the beaten foe with discredit by alleging that the motives of this little Latin state were selfish, as selfish as the German ambitions. And in a certain measure the western world absorbed this poison. Yet nothing could be more untrue or unjust. Rumania sought to liberate men and women of her own race eager to become fellow citizens; Germany brought the terrible war upon the world to enslave people of alien races whose desire—expressed in gallant and despairing resistance—was to escape the German yoke and preserve their own national liberty.

Rumania was crushed as Sardinia was crushed at Novara; all her patriotic dreams were extinguished, for the time being, in the terrible disasters of the last weeks of 1916. Afterward, the collapse of Russia led to the final betrayal; Rumania, powerless to resist longer, was thrown to her enemies by the Bolsheviki; she had to accept the terms of a new

Treaty of Bucharest which bound her hand and foot to the Central Powers—politically, economically, in all respects save morally. But the very circumstances of her betrayal and surrender were such that a duty was placed upon her western allies—who were powerless to prevent the destruction, who had welcomed an ally already marked for slaughter—to demand and obtain for Rumania (exactly as for Serbia equally unfortunate), not merely liberty and a restoration of the lands seized in the present war, but the realization of the larger but not less valid moral claims upon Rumanian peoples beyond the limits of the political map of 1914.

Belgium, Serbia, Rumania; these are the three small states which were, each in turn, sacrificed to the German power, while their great allies stood helpless and hopeless, unable to foresee the truth as to the situation in each of these countries, unable to aid when the truth became manifest. For the Belgian martyrdom there was, perhaps, no remedy; but it is impossible to believe, now, that both the Serbian and the Rumanian disasters could not have been avoided had western statesmen been capable of perceiving the truth and seeing the battlefield of Europe as a whole.

III. CONSPIRACY

At the outset of the World War the aged King Carol—to whom Rumania owed much of her prosperous development in previous decades but who was a German and a Hohenzollern by derivation and tradition—sought earnestly to persuade his country to enter the struggle on the side of the Central Powers. In this his failure was absolute. Bound, like Italy, by a defensive alliance with Germany and with Austria, Rumanian statesmen, like Italian, instantly asserted that the war upon which the Central Powers had embarked was offensive, not defensive, and that, as a consequence, Rumania was under no obligation to furnish military aid.

The early death of King Carol removed the one force which might have preserved Rumanian neutrality; no force could have availed to enlist Rumania on the Austrian side. The new sovereign, Ferdinand,

did not share his predecessors' extreme German sympathies and his wife—a daughter of the Duke of Edinburgh and a brilliant and beautiful woman—was wholly devoted to the idea of Rumanian participation on the Allied side. Like the Queen of Greece, who is the Kaiser's only sister, the Rumanian Queen, whose mother was a Russian Grand Duchess, played a powerful part—although in an opposing cause—in all the Balkan intrigues of the first two years of the war.

Yet before the struggle was far advanced it was patent that Rumania did but await the favourable moment to enter the conflict, that Rumanian policy was identical with that of Italy. Both Latin states foresaw the need of temporary neutrality, pending alike the reorganization of their military power and the arrival of the moment when their intervention might be effective. In 1915, when Italy cast her lot with the Allies and declared war upon Austria, Rumania would have followed suit promptly, but the Russian defeat at the Dunajec and the expulsion of Russian armies from the Bukowina and Galicia, together with the far-swinging German invasion of Russia, forbade Rumanian intervention. Not until it was clear that Russia could react after such a series of disasters was a Rumanian declaration conceivable. Moreover, in the period just preceding the Dunajec, Russian statesmen had adopted, with respect of Rumania, a high tone and an uncompromising spirit in the matter of territorial arrangements, which had contributed to delaying any possible Rumanian participation until the Dunajec defeat arrived.

But Brusiloff's victories in June, 1916, had changed the situation. Lechitsky's successful advance through the Bukowina to the Carpathian passes had secured the northern flank of Rumanian forces and insured communications between Russia and Rumania. These victories, too, gave early promise of leading swiftly to a decisive triumph over Austria and the downfall of the Hapsburg Monarchy. In Bucharest and elsewhere it was believed that Rumania's hour had come, and the reports of German and Austrian ministers in the Rumanian capital alike bore testimony to the fact that the entrance of Rumania could no longer be postponed for any considerable time.

It was, however, from Petrograd and not from Bucharest that the

word came. An ultimatum was suddenly despatched from Russia to Rumania demanding that Rumania forthwith enlist or pay the penalty in the surrender of all hopes for territorial and racial unification at the close of the war. In substance the Stuermer Cabinet said to the Rumanian Premier, Bratiano: "Either you now throw Rumania into the struggle on our side or you forfeit all claim upon us for any future benefit when Austria, now on the point of collapse, is finally beaten." To such an ultimatum there could be but one answer.

Yet the purpose of Stuermer and his associates is now clear. Already they realized that Brusiloff's offensive had reached its crest. Treason, corruption, incapacity, added to the natural lack of industrial machinery, had made impossible the task of munitioning and supplying the vast Russian armies sufficiently to permit the continuation of the victorious advance in the southeast. And unless a decisive victory were to be had, only peace could prevent a Russian revolution, fatal to the Crown and to the bureaucracy alike. Since the decisive victory was not to be obtained, peace was to be had only when a new German military victory should establish the fact that no complete or even relatively complete Allied victory was possible. Such a German victory, if won against Russia, would discredit further the already discredited Russian Government, but if Rumania were defeated, instead of Russia, the régime might escape and—peace by negotiation following—its hands might be left free for a campaign of repression within Russia, which would prevent the revolution otherwise inevitable.

This much has already been made clear by the documents which were spread before an astonished Allied world in the early stages of the Russian Revolution. Rumania was ordered by the Russian Cabinet to go to what was expected and even planned to be certain defeat. Not only was all necessary aid refused to Rumania in advance of the opening of her campaign, but she was betrayed into the Transylvania offensive by the express assurance from Petrograd that Bulgaria would remain neutral. Yet as soon as Rumania was deeply committed in Transylvania, Bulgaria—as she had done in the case of Serbia in the previous year—threw off the mask and declared war, and thus opened

the way for the campaign of Mackensen, which led to the fall of Bucharest and the ruin of Rumania.

Such, in their broadest details, are the circumstances of the betrayal of Rumania. The Russian bureaucracy prepared a defeat of the Rumanian armies that the way might be opened for a peace by negotiation. We are left to conjecture how far this conspiracy was based upon utter treason to Russia—procured by German intrigue at the Russian Court—and German corruption in high places, and how far it was the result of the conviction of the reigning bureaucracy that only peace could save Russia from revolution. In any case, it was beyond any conceivable defence. It was the shameful betrayal of a little state, forced by a brutal ultimatum to take up arms in the face of certain ruin. Seeking to escape domestic revolution, the Russian Cabinet invited defeat on the battlefield—but defeat, not for its own armies, but for those of a state, that was powerless to resist the imperative order of Petrograd that it take up arms or forego its legitimate national aspirations.

And when Rumania had fallen, Germany, true to her agreement with Petrograd, made her proposal of peace by negotiation; but the western nations declined the proffer. Russia fell into revolution as a consequence, just as Stuermer had foreseen. One other consequence of the Revolution—satisfactory to all the world which at last knew the truth—was the execution of those ministers and agents who had procured the Rumanian betrayal. Their treason was in vain; neither Russia nor their own régime was saved; but they did not meet their doom until Rumania had been wrecked and their western Allies had lost the Battle of Europe.

IV. THE RUMANIAN OFFENSIVE

On the morning of her declaration of war Rumania's situation was this: She had 300,000 first-line troops and had added to this number sufficiently to bring the field strength of her army to about half a million. The troops were fairly well equipped in minor details, but were woefully weak in the all-essential departments of heavy artillery, field artillery, and machine guns. There was, also, only a scanty supply of

munitions for such artillery as was available. Tardy but sincere efforts made by France and Britain to equip their prospective ally had been thwarted by the treachery of Russian officials and the inefficiency of Russian transport. Guns intended for Rumania were presently discovered in the Ural Mountains and vast quantities of munitions remained at Archangel.

At the outset of the campaign the Rumanian problem was twofold, Rumania had to face two eventualities represented by an existing army in the Bulgarian frontier regions and by the sure arrival of an Austro-German force on the northern and western frontiers beyond the Transylvanian Alps. But at the moment Transylvania was empty of all but a few divisions of garrison troops. Some effort must be made westward, because there was already gathering on the flank of Lechitsky's forces in the Bukowina a counter-offensive, designed to restore the situation which had been compromised by Brusiloff's series of victories in June and subsequently.

The temptation was to extend this necessary operation into a real invasion of Transylvania, the passage of the mountains, and the occupation of Transylvanian territory until the line should run straight from Dorna Watra, where the Rumanians made contact with the Russians, straight down to the Iron Gates. This would shorten the extended front by a third, give the Rumanians the advantage of lateral communication behind the new front—a thing that was lacking, if they stood at the frontier—and it would instantly liberate a large portion of the territory which all Rumanians looked forward to seeing incorporated in their national domain as a result of the war.

The danger of such a venture—the fatal danger, as it was to develop all too soon—lay in the fact that if Rumania sent her masses northward, the Dobrudja district would be open to immediate invasion from Bulgaria and even Bucharest would be exposed to ultimate peril when the enemy forces south of the Danube reached sufficient strength.

All turned upon the attitude of Bulgaria, and the tactics of Bulgaria, with respect of Serbia a year before, gave a fair indication of what might be expected now. On the other hand, imperious directions came from

Petrograd to Bucharest for the invasion of Transylvania, coupled with the assurance that Bulgaria would remain neutral so far as Rumania was concerned; in fact, it was the identical assurance which, before Mackensen had struck south, had come to Belgrade in 1915, while Bulgaria was still unmobilized and a Serbian army on foot could have struck the Bulgarians down.

Had Bulgaria been actually an enemy, Rumania then would have had no choice but to go south and dispose of the Bulgarian force before she turned north and this was possible, because it was bound to take time for the Austrians and Germans to get together a force to attack Rumania. Moreover, this course would give promise of an eventual junction with the Salonica army, which was bound to advance when once the Bulgarian forces before it were drawn northward to defend Sofia. The result might have been a fairly accurate repetition of the events in the Second Balkan War, three years before.

Advised by Russia, however, that Bulgaria would not take a hand, Rumania sent her armies across the Transylvanian frontier on the first day of the war. This frontier was three hundred miles in extent and followed the crest of the Carpathian Mountains, which made a fairly regular right angle, enclosing Transylvania on two sides and separating it from Wallachia on the south and Moldavia on the east. These mountains were cut by a number of passes, the chief of which on the southern side of the right angle and from west to east were the Vulkan, the Red Tower, and the Predeal, and on the east side, from south to north, the Oitoz, Gyimes, and Bekas.

Rumanian forces were divided into four armies—three of them destined to invade Hungarian territory and the fourth, whose mission it was to defend the Danubian frontier and the Dobrudja district between Silistria on the river and Kavarna on the sea. The mission of the First Army was to pass the mountains by the Vulcan Pass and seize Hermannstadt; of the Second, to penetrate the Predeal Pass and take Kronstadt, while the Army of the North—always preserving its contact with Lechitsky's Russian forces—was to advance through all three of the eastern passes. If the invasion was pushed with sufficient speed



A-A *LIMIT OF RUMANIAN ADVANCE.* **B** *FALKENHAYN'S ADVANCE.* **C** *MACKENSEN'S ADVANCE.* ■ ■ ■ *LIMIT OF GERMAN ADVANCE.*

the Rumanians could hope to absorb all of the Transylvanian territory enclosed by the two sides of the right angle, occupy the valley of the middle Maros, and turn to their own uses the very considerable number of railroads in the occupied districts, which were admirably adapted to aid an army that had reached the Maros Valley.

We have, then, the objectives of the invasion clearly defined, and during September they were all, in large part, realized. The Army of the North reached the edge of the Maros Valley at Parajd; the Second Army took Kronstadt; the First Army arrived before Hermannstadt, but was unable to occupy it. Meantime, events to the south were taking

a serious turn. First of all, Bulgaria promptly declared war upon Rumania, so that all the calculations based upon Bulgarian neutrality went into the discard. Secondly, on September 7, Mackensen—taking command of the forces of Bulgarians, Turks, and Germans immediately available—pushed across the Dobrudja frontier, destroyed one Rumanian division about Turtukai on the Danube, and drove the other division of covering troops back toward the vital Constanza-Bucharest railway.

Instantly it became necessary to detach troops from the armies engaged in the invasion of Transylvania and send them southward across the mountains to the Dobrudja. Arrived there they did temporarily arrest Mackensen well south of the Constanza railway, but their departure fatally compromised the Transylvanian campaign. Meantime Mackensen, having accomplished his purpose, halted, and proceeded to organize the reinforcements which were swiftly sent to him from Austria and from Germany. Henceforth, while matters were beginning to go badly in the north, a new menace was gathering in the south. Already Rumania was beginning to be fatally caught between the upper and the lower millstones.

V. FALKENHAYN AND MACKENSEN

At the outset of the Rumanian invasion of Transylvania there was little resistance; refugees from the invaded districts, which were German and partly Magyar in population, flowed back to Vienna and to Budapest; there was great commotion in the Hungarian Parliament and passionate appeals to Berlin for aid. These appeals were heard. Falkenhayn—who had been succeeded on the General Staff by the great Hindenburg, as a consequence of the Verdun failure—was assigned to command the army that Germany at once began to organize for a counter-offensive.

It was a powerful force, too, which Hindenburg entrusted to his predecessor. First and last, the Central Powers employed not less than thirty-seven divisions against the Rumanians of which twenty were first-line German units. But powerful as was this force, numerically

IN THE PATH OF WAR



Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

A SYMBOL OF KULTUR

It was through no will or intention of the Germans that the saints on either side of the cross were spared



Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

THIS WAS A VILLAGE

The ruined village of Farbus, captured by the Canadians



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

THIS WAS A FARM

Shelling the ruins of towns and villages seemed to give the Teutons positive pleasure. They kept it up as long as anything remained standing



Italian Official Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

THIS WAS A HOSPITAL

This is a typical example of Hun inhumanity. The picture shows the interior of the St. John Hospital, Venice, after bombardment by the Germans



Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

THIS WAS A CHURCH

The ruins were still under shell-fire when this picture was taken



Photograph from Central News Photo Service

THIS WAS A TOWN—BAPAUME

The church in the square at Bapaume, taken while the town was burning

"No blade of grass was ever seen
Where Attila and his hosts had been."—Old Ballad



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

THIS WAS A ROAD

This road, one of the magnificent highways of France, had been all but obliterated by German shells. If any trees were left standing after the bombardment, they were girdled or cut down



Photograph by Underwood & Underwood

THIS IS NOT A SCENE IN ANCIENT GREECE, BUT ONE IN MODERN FRANCE

Mesnil-les-Hurlus was destroyed with German thoroughness—especially the church. But what is left standing is still suggestive of beauty

and otherwise—and the German contingent was as strong as the forces which had been thrown against Verdun in the first month of attack—its artillery train was even more imposing. Once more Germany proposed to destroy an enemy—as she had destroyed Belgian, Serbian, and Russian armies—by bringing to bear upon its victim a vast mass of heavy artillery, to meet which the opposing commanders could only employ field pieces.

The German counter-offensive was launched on September 20 and two groups of armies were employed: that directed against the south side of the Transylvania right angle included the Ninth German Army commanded by German generals; the force sent against the eastern side was mainly Austrian and under the direction of the Archduke Joseph; but Falkenhayn was commander-in-chief. On the date of the opening of the counter-offensive the Rumanians were still somewhat east of the valley of the middle Maros, facing west, from Dorna Watra to Orsova, on a line which curved in slightly at the centre.

Falkenhayn's strategy was simple. He would throw his main mass of manœuvre against first one and then another of the Rumanian armies, defeat them in detail, push through the Predeal Pass, and, debouching in the Wallachian Plain, join hands with Mackensen, come north across the Danube, under the walls of Bucharest. This operation, if it achieved maximum success, would cut off all the Rumanian armies west of the Dimbovitza (on which Bucharest stands), prevent their retreat toward the Russians, and capture them.

The opening blow fell upon the First Rumanian Army standing before Hermannstadt; it was heavily beaten, driven south through the Vulcan Pass, one section of its force separated from the main body and driven eastward upon the Second Army, standing about Kronstadt. The next blow fell upon this Second Army, which was now standing with its flank uncovered by the retreat of the First Army. Defeated about Kronstadt the Second Army was compelled to retire upon the Predeal Pass. Meantime the Army of the North, its flank uncovered by the retreat of the Second Army, had no choice but to retire to the Moldavian boundary. The invasion of Transylvania was now a thing

of the past. There remained the question of the defence of Rumanian territory from the threatened invasion of Falkenhayn.

Meantime, the moment had arrived for Mackensen to move again. The Rumanian armies were heavily engaged to the north, desperately seeking to prevent the enemy from coming southward. Accordingly, in the third week of October, Mackensen suddenly took the offensive on the Dobrudja front, pushed northward across the Constanza railway, occupied Constanza on October 22, and thus cut Rumania off from her one seaport, interrupted the main line of water communication between Rumania and Russia, and occupied a considerable portion of the Dobrudja province. His offensive again came to a standstill upon the arrival of two Russian divisions sent by Brusiloff, which arrived too late to save Constanza.

In the same period Falkenhayn had been trying to get through the Predeal Pass, nearest to Bucharest, but had been checked. He had been no more successful at the Red Tower Pass to the west and had suffered a preliminary check at the Vulcan. But Rumania was not capable of presenting equal strength at four points: at the Predeal, the Red Tower, and the Vulcan Passes, and before Mackensen in the Dobrudja. The inevitable weak point was at the Vulcan Pass and in the first fortnight of November the moment had arrived when, with the weak point exposed and the preparations made, Falkenhayn could deal the decisive blow.

This blow was the defeat of Ter Jiu, in the upper reaches of the Jiu River, where this stream emerges from the mountains and enters the Wallachian Plain. November 17 the First Rumanian Army was decisively beaten. The invaders, preceded by a mass of cavalry, swept down into the plain, cutting off the troops defending the frontier toward the Iron Gates and, wheeling into line between the Danube and the mountains, began an irresistible march toward Bucharest. Faced with disaster, the Rumanians retired behind the Alt, which comes down from the mountains through Red Tower Pass and flows straight across the Plain to the Danube.

Before this line could be made good, however, the Germans to the

RUMANIA IN THE LION'S JAWS.



BLACK SHOWS TERRITORY OCCUPIED BY THE CENTRAL POWERS. A-VULCAN PASS. B-RED TOWER PASS. C-PREDEAL AND TOMOS PASS. D-GYMES PASS E-BEKAS PASS.

north descended through Red Tower Pass and occupied positions east of the Alt and between it and Bucharest. Meantime, while the Rumanians were endeavouring to rally behind the Argelu—another river crossing the plain parallel to the Alt and constituting the last natural defence of the Rumanian capital—Mackensen forced the passage of the Danube, east of the point where the Argelu enters the larger river; his point of passage was at Sistova, where the Russians had crossed in 1877. In the first days of December Mackensen and Falkenhayn had united before Bucharest, and Falkenhayn's northern army was already on the flank of the last position on which Bucharest could be defended.

The last battle—that for the capital, the Battle of the Argelu—was over by December 4. In its last stages three Russian divisions fought, but the aid had come too late. Bucharest was evacuated on December 5 and occupied by the armies of the victorious Central Powers on the following day. In the next few days the Rumanian army, not without grave difficulty, slipped out of the enveloping arms of Mackensen and Falkenhayn and retired upon the lines of Sereth, covering the region between the Danube and the Moldavian stretches of the Carpathians. Two thirds of Rumania was in enemy hands; the Government had fled to Jassy, on the Russian frontier; the Rumanian army had lost more than 300,000 men, two thirds in casualties and the balance in prisoners. In their retreat the Rumanians had fired their great oil wells and burned their wheat crops, but if the booty of the Germans was far less than they had expected, the defeat of Rumania was absolute; she had been temporarily ruined. Once more, as in the last Russo-Turkish War, the intervention of her armies had averted a prospective Russian disaster, for had the forces thrown against Averscu's Rumanian armies been used against Brusiloff, another Dunajec might have resulted. Once more, as after Plevna, Rumania's reward was to be the sacrifice of her own territory—and, this time, of her own political and economic freedom.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

SALONICA AND MONASTIR

I

AT SALONICA

In the general scheme of the combined Allied offensives, the Salonica army had been counted upon to act against Bulgaria. When Rumania entered the war the obvious necessity to use every effort to contain Bulgarian troops in Macedonia and prevent their transfer to the Rumanian front gave new value to the Salonica force. But neither before nor after Rumania's entrance could this army accomplish anything of material value.

The reasons were almost innumerable. In the first place, the Army of the Orient had been sent to Salonica to save the Serbs; it arrived too late to accomplish its purpose and, instead of reaching Uskub, it was compelled to retire hastily upon Salonica. Then began a long debate as to whether an army should be maintained in the Orient or the Salonica force be recalled as that of Gallipoli had been. The soldiers argued for recall, the politicians were divided. Briand in France at last exercised the decisive influence and the army stayed. But having decided to maintain an army in the Near East, the politicians who had overborne the soldiers now compromised with them and permitted the soldiers to neglect the army.

To command on the new front France sent Sarrail—an unwise appointment made at the behest of Joffre, who was eager to get out of France a political general who deserved his evil opinion. Sarrail was the friend of Caillaux and of Malvy; he was supported by their political influence, and that influence was at no time exerted for the decisive military victory that the French nation and its allies sought. In Salonica Sarrail did no material harm, but he accomplished no great result. Ultimately, when Clemenceau came to the helm in France, he was re-

called, but until Clemenceau did come, no one dared to disturb the friend of such powerful politicians.

But even had Sarrail been a Foch or a Pétain, his task in the Orient would still have been well-nigh impossible. Such troops as were sent him were in the main of the least tactical value. They were a strange assortment of the colonials of all the nations at war, and to them were added Russians and Italians. The best single unit was the Serbian army, which was presently reorganized by France and sent back from Corfu; but this was long in coming.

Meantime, with the relatively weak force at his immediate call, Sarrail had to transform Salonica into an entrenched camp capable of resisting the assault of a German army if the Kaiser should presently decide to complete his domination of the Balkans by driving into the sea the intruders at Salonica. This involved the construction of railways, roads, and innumerable trenches and fortifications; it involved, also, the transformation of the harbour of Salonica, destitute of all the machinery of a modern port.

Difficult in itself, the task was rendered even more burdensome by the political circumstances. The Allies were on Greek soil, whither they had come at the invitation of the Greek Premier, Venizelos, who had sought to throw his country into the alliance against Germany. But Venizelos had failed and fallen. King Constantine was now in complete control and his sympathies and his influence were all with his brother-in-law, the Kaiser. Unable to compel the Allied army to quit Salonica, he used every possible means to impede it. His garrisons were hostile, his civil officials were invariably obstructive.

Even more grotesque were certain other circumstances. As Salonica was a Greek city and Greece nominally a neutral nation, representatives of the Central Powers, consular and diplomatic, continued to live in it and to serve their governments. Every ship that entered the port bringing men or munitions was duly reported; every movement of troops promptly described to hostile general staffs. And while every instrumentality of the Greek Government was employed to impede the Allies, it was with equal industry serving the interests of the Central

Powers. Actually Sarrail occupied a hostile city, with none of the powers which usually accrue to a general commanding an army in similar circumstances.

Worst of all was the ever-present possibility, destined to increase with the months, that, in addition to an attack from the avowed enemy on the north, Sarrail might have to face an onslaught from the rear by the Greek army and made in close coördination with a German offensive launched from the Vardar Valley. In this situation the Allied statesmen shuffled and the Allied army suffered. The situation was impossible and intolerable, and yet it was not cleared up satisfactorily during all of 1916.

II. INCIDENTS

At the outset of the year the condition of the Allies in Salonica was almost incredible. They had constructed landward defences, still inadequate but now considerable. But the forts at the entrance to the harbour—Karaburnu, in particular—were in Greek hands and the guns and the garrison were ready, at the slightest pretext, to fire upon Allied shipping and Allied troops. Not until German air raids had roused Sarrail was any step taken to abolish a situation which was as dangerous as it was absurd. But on January 28, after amusing preliminary performances, Karaburnu was taken over by the Allies. Somewhat later the consular and other agents of the enemy powers were sent away, but before this there occurred a new incident.

Greece was at peace with Bulgaria, and the Bulgarian army had halted at the Greek frontier in its pursuit of the French and British troops who had sought to rescue the Serbs at the Greek frontier. But on May 26 the Greek garrison, holding Fort Ruppel—which commanded the outlet of the Struma Valley and thus the direct road from Sofia to the Ægean—surrendered to a Bulgarian force. The surrender was at the direct command of the Greek King, who negotiated a loan of $15,000,000 from Germany as a payment. Its consequences were serious for the Salonica army.

Hitherto there had only been a northern front, but now the Bulgars

came south and occupied all of the Kavala-Drama district, all of the Greek territory east of the Struma, seized the Adrianople-Salonica railway east of the Struma, and thus possessed themselves of a valuable line of communication. Henceforth their troops could be munitioned and supplied by this railway line and the difficulties incident to the transport of men and material over the mountain trails of the Struma Valley was abolished. Sarrail had now to watch the Struma and to be on his guard against an attack from the east as well as from the north.

The campaign of 1916 for the Salonica army was to be a push up the Vardar Valley, but the push never was made for the Bulgarians anticipated Sarrail and thrust southward, across the Greek frontier at Florina and along the Monastir-Salonica railway. They began their attack on August 17 and in the next few days came south as far as Ostrovo Lake, driving the Serbs before them. Again there was Greek treachery and the Greek frontier guards discreetly retired in advance of the Bulgarian attack.

As a result of this new thrust Salonica was now threatened from the east, along the Adrianople-Salonica railway; from the north, down the Vardar Valley along the Salonica-Belgrade railway; and from the west, along the Monastir-Salonica railway. Always, too, there was the possibility that the Greek army would strike from the south and join hands with the Bulgars at Lake Ostrovo. The Bulgarian offensive, however, was checked and the danger from the west temporarily abolished, but the invaders continued to hold their conquests.

Meantime, events in Greece were taking a favourable turn at last. The Greeks of Macedonia—seeing Kavala and Drama surrendered to the hereditary enemy, seeing the Bulgars advancing from the west, knowing that the entrance of a Bulgarian force into Salonica would mean the extinction of Hellenic rule in this portion of Macedonia—suddenly rose against their king and, in the last days of August, Sarrail recognized the revolutionists. A little later, on October 9, Venizelos came to Salonica and assumed direction of the new government, which had the support of the Greeks in the islands and in Macedonia. This new government declared war upon the Central Alliance and began

to enlist troops for service against the Bulgars, but Constantine still ruled in Athens and controlled the mainland as far as the immediate environs of Salonica itself.

All this time negotiating and bickering were going forward between Constantine and the Allies. Greece was blockaded and then the blockade was raised, as a result of a paper concession of the King, never realized in fact. All the time the hostility of the King grew, the activity of the German agents increased. In December, eighty-three French sailors were murdered in Athens and there was a general killing of the Venizellist leaders by the King's adherents. Short of the removal of the King no solution of the problem was possible, but to the very last moment Allied governments could not make up their mind to take this step. The result was the constant hampering of Sarrail's plans, for he had ever to guard against an attack from the rear and by the Greeks, while facing the open enemy in the field.

III. MONASTIR

It was not until September 13 that the Army of the Orient was at last able to take the field. The plans for an offensive up the Vardar Valley had been upset by the Bulgarian thrust south from Monastir, the possibility of using the army as a whole in any offensive had been thwarted by the Greek surrender of Fort Ruppel, which had opened the flank toward the Struma to an enemy attack and the very menacing attitude of the Greek army in the rear, which seemed always about to assail the Allies.

With a relatively restricted force, consisting of Serbs, French, and Russians, Sarrail began his operation at the close of the second week in September by driving the Bulgarians back from Ostrovo Lake. He advanced astride the roads and railway leading to Monastir. As he advanced he forced the Bulgarians back upon their final positions, covering Monastir, and stretched across the lower end of the Plain of Monastir to the mountains on either side of the Cerna River, where it makes its great northward bend.

In all the fighting of this campaign the greater task belonged to the

Serbs and the most distinguished generalship was revealed by their commander, Marshal Mishitch. In the first days of November the Serbs at last stood on their own soil again. In the next few days they drove northward along the high mountains in the bend of the Cerna, which command the plain and the defences of Monastir. On November 17 and 18 the Serbs cleared the eastern hills and the defence of the place was no longer possible. On November 19—the fourth anniversary of their capture of the town in the First Balkan War—the Serbs again controlled Monastir, although the town was actually occupied by French troops, whose advance along the plain had been made possible by the Serbian successes on the heights.

Unhappily the victory could have no considerable consequences. Rumania was already beaten, and no pressure upon Bulgaria in this quarter could be of use to the stricken ally. Winter had come to the Balkans; the mountains were covered with snow; and, worst of all, new activities of the Greek army to the south and in the rear of the troops at Salonica compelled Sarrail to send French troops south to guard against a hostile move on the part of Constantine.

As a consequence, it was not even possible to clear the hills north of Monastir, much less push northward over Babuna Pass to the Vardar Valley or by Resna to Ochrida and the Drin Valley. Accordingly, enemy artillery on the heights continued to pound the troops in Monastir and the town itself had to be evacuated by its civil population. The Allies had taken Monastir, they continued to hold it, but the possession had no military value; and, as long as they held the hills above the city, the Bulgars suffered no material loss by their defeat.

With the taking of Monastir the Balkan campaign ends. Nearly two years were to pass before the city reappeared in the official reports of battles or the country in the bend of the Cerna saw severe and sustained fighting. Henceforth the Salonica adventure steadily lost value in the eyes of Allied general staffs. With the fall of Rumania Germany had acquired new avenues from her own and Austrian soil to Bulgarian and Turkish territory. The Danube was open from the head of navigation to its mouth. The Rumanian railways were available. A thrust

up the Vardar Valley to Nish, thus cutting the Belgrade-Sofia link in the Vienna-Constantinople railway, could no longer sever the single life line between the northern and central members of the Central Alliance.

The great opportunity for the Allies in the Balkans had been lost in 1915 when Serbia had been suffered to go to disaster while British and French forces waged their futile fight at Gallipoli. If Rumania could have struck down Bulgaria at the outset of her campaign in 1916 it might have been possible for Sarrail to join hands with Averescu across Bulgaria, as the Greeks, Serbs, and Rumanians were on the point of doing when Bulgaria gave up the struggle in 1913. But with the collapse of Rumania, the Allies lost their last immediate hope in the Balkans and for two years Salonica was to lose interest for the world, and its army be forgotten in the rush of events on the western front. When it did reappear, however, the consequences of a single victory were destined to justify all the efforts, realize all the hopes, anden dorse all the claims of the champions of the Army of the Orient.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE END OF THE CAMPAIGN

I

THE EFFECT OF BUCHAREST

With the fall of Bucharest the campaign of 1916 ends. It had been, all things considered, the bloodiest and most terrible campaign of the first three years of the war. Verdun, the Somme, and Brusiloff's offensive had involved the sacrifice of more human lives than had been exacted as the price of any single campaign in human history. And with the fall of Bucharest all the hopes and aspirations of the western powers and the western publics went instantly to dust and ashes; in place of optimism, little warranted by the facts, there now succeeded a period of gloom and despondency which the enemy was to turn to his own advantage.

Looking backward over the progress of the campaign of 1916 we can now see that there was not the smallest chance that either contestant could achieve a decision in it. The larger strategy of both groups of nations was equally based upon misconceptions. The Germans had attacked Verdun in the late winter, convinced that France was bled white and that the moment was ripe for the final thrust. Nothing could have been more absurd. France had suffered, but she had reserves; she had not merely divisions and corps, but armies—available for attack as well as defence—and the French spirit in and out of the army was, in 1916, unshaken. The result was the unmistakable defeat of the Crown Prince before Verdun and the German loss of the offensive in the west.

In the same fashion Austria had attacked Italy, convinced that heavy artillery, massed in the Trentino, would repeat the success achieved in Serbia the previous autumn against troops at least as good as the Italian but similarly destitute of heavy artillery. Moreover, Berlin and Vienna were equally convinced that Russia had been so

heavily beaten in the previous year that any new Russian offensive, while the Verdun and Italian operations were in progress, was unthinkable. Here, again, was a singular misconception. Russia was capable of another great effort—her last, to be sure—but this effort was to tax Austria-Hungary to the uttermost and make demands upon Germany which were at least awkward to meet.

On the other hand, Allied estimates of the conditions existing in enemy countries were even more grotesque. The firm conviction that Germany and Austria were starving, that the people of these countries believed themselves beaten, that German man-power was failing, a child-like faith in the resources of Russia imagined to be without limit, a blindness to the growing exhaustion of the Russian nation, moral as well as economic; above all, an inability to see the struggle as a whole or to perceive the western struggles in their true perspective; all these errors of judgment and calculation led to bitter disappointment following severe military defeats.

There was still an absence of unity of thought, interest, or strategy in the Allied countries. In France the necessities of the situation imposed a certain coördination of military operations, but even this was restricted. Actually not one but half a dozen wars were being conducted against Germany and Austria, against Bulgaria and Turkey, by the nations of the opposing group and each of the nations striking at the Central Powers was conducting its operations in conformity with its own strategy, its own policy, and its own theory of the necessary political and economic readjustments of the period after the war.

The result was chaos, only a little modified by occasional crises when the very greatness of some immediate peril imposed upon all concerned the necessity for some momentary harmonizing of activities. The result of this lack of central, directing authority and vision was to be seen in the disaster in Mesopotamia, the failure to turn to any profitable end the enormous investment of men and material at Salonica, in the shuffling policy with respect to Bulgaria in 1915, and with respect of Greece all through 1916. As a consequence, so utterly inconsiderable and personally insignificant a personage as King Constantine was able,

in the presence of his amazed and bewildered subjects, to flout the Great Powers of Europe and thwart their plans, murder their soldiers, and, with long-continuing impunity, wage war under their noses, while still preserving his highly placed champions in London and in Petrograd.

By contrast Austro-German policy—the policy of the whole group of Central Powers—was made in Germany. The Turks in Mesopotamia, the Austrians in Volhynia, the Bulgarians in the Dobrudja and Macedonia, quite as much as the Germans at Verdun and the Somme, marched to the same orders and responded to a single impulse. Germany fought one war; her foes, a dozen. She sought one objective at a time, her foes pursued innumerable ends simultaneously. For her single purpose Germany mobilized an immense army and a vast train of artillery; she never had more than one major operation in view at a given moment, and, for this, she had ever the necessary resources. Thus it was that, with an inferior population, an infinitely smaller reservoir of men, material, and money, the Central Powers were constantly able to thwart the undertakings of foes who, in all fields, were now becoming the superiors of their enemies in all that material and man-power could mean.

The Rumanian campaign was the best example of the German method. Rumania was coerced into her declaration of war by a Russian Ministry already dominated by defeatist sentiments; Rumania was to be the sacrifice by which Stuermer was to save Brusiloff and the prestige of the Russian army; but with the defeat of Rumania, peace by negotiation was to come. Yet Russia's allies, oblivious of the conditions within the Slav nation and to the influences dominating the Government, joined with the Stuermer Cabinet in exerting pressure upon Rumania, which could only result in throwing a Rumanian army, without heavy artillery or any of the vital equipment of war, against the German veterans, who were supplied with unlimited resources in guns and in munitions.

All through 1916, as in the previous campaign, the Allies were hypnotized by the western front. London and Paris could not perceive the fact that Russia was sinking, would not listen to the few informed

voices which uttered warnings deserving at least of passing attention. While Haig and Foch were taking a few hectares of Picardy, Russia was swiftly, surely, sinking into hopeless weakness. Another year was to disclose Russia gone; German victory in the east, as in the Balkans, established; German armies in the west preparing for the final campaign, which should abolish the last danger to Mitteleuropa and place William II in a grander and more secure position than Napoleon had ever occupied.

Three great western powers were conducting a World War as if it were for each of them a separate war; they were conducting it with a vision as limited as that of a provincial or colonial public. Britain did not understand France; French impatience at the delay in British preparations; Anglo-French misapprehension of Italy and blindness to Italian problems; the complete ignorance on the part of Britain, France, and Italy as to the truth about Russia—these were circumstances that must puzzle future generations. They led to mistakes which almost lost the war; they were mistakes which were not remedied until Ludendorff had well-nigh won the war in Picardy in March, 1918, and impending ruin at last imposed upon the western allies that essential unity of command and of purposes which alone could be the foundation of victory.

By contrast, Germany's mistakes were less obvious and, in a sense, less culpable. The German saw the smaller facts as they were. He knew always what objective he sought and he bent the will of his allies until they joined in the pursuit of his objective, or he modified his objectives in such fashion as to embrace operations dear to the hearts of his allies and which might contribute to his own ends. He was not led into any error because he overestimated the value of the west or ascribed to a minor operation the value of a major campaign. His miscalculations had a sound basis; he knew what was going on in Russia, but his conclusion that, as a result of domestic conditions, Russia was already out of the war in June, was a premature conclusion; he perceived the terrible difficulties of the Italian situation, but in sending Austrian troops to the Trentino, he anticipated the hour when a great blow might

do almost incalculable harm. In 1917 he accomplished, in respect of Russia and Italy, what he had failed to achieve in 1916.

Only one mistake of the German was capital, colossal; he continued to think solely in material terms. He could not understand the spiritual forces which he had enlisted against him; he could not estimate the material importance of the moral indignation he had roused all over the world; he could not understand the spirit of France—revealed at the Marne and again, in even greater splendour, at Verdun. He could not understand that, having sought the life of the several nations at war with him, he must expect that these nations—however stupid and clumsy their leadership, however faulty their military commanders—would fight for their lives, refusing all accommodations possible between rivals contending for some prize in territory or trade, but inconceivable between men fighting—on the one hand, at least—for their lives, the existence of their country, the permanence of their civilization; every one of which had been placed in jeopardy by the German attack fighting in very truth for all that men hold worth while.

II. THE RESULT

Looked at from the largest possible perspective, there can be no questioning the fact that Germany had won the campaign of 1916. She had not taken Verdun or occupied Venetia; she had suffered local reverses at the Somme, and Austria had endured approximate disasters in Galicia, Bukowina, and Volhynia; even Bulgaria had lost Monastir; but never was the relative unimportance of geographical incidents more clearly emphasized.

The central purpose of German strategy in 1916 had been based upon the assumption that in 1915 Germany had won the war, provided that what had been gained could be held. Frederick the Great had seized Silesia in the first hours of his initial campaign. Thereafter he had held it through long years of war—years in which his strategy and his ambition had been comprehended in the determination to retain what he had seized. The case of William II was wholly analogous, although the stakes were immeasurably greater.



From a painting by Lieut. Henry Farré. Courtesy of the artist.

AN AËRIAL COLLISION

Between a Baby Nieuport and a German Rumpler. The German plane had been in the habit of coming over the French trenches for photographs and had always returned safely to its lines. On this day three French airplanes attacked the Boche on his return. Quartermaster de Terline, arriving at the proper altitude, noticed that his two companions had been forced to abandon the pursuit—from motor trouble as it happened. Terline, thinking his two comrades wounded, dashed at his adversary 3,500 feet above the earth and sent the German machine crashing to the ground.

At the opening of the campaign of 1916 Germany had in her hands the framework of that Mitteleuropa which had been the dream of her patriots and her statesmen for at least half a century. From the Baltic to the lower Euphrates, from the Pripet Marshes to the Belgian Coast, one will reigned and one purpose prevailed. More than 150,000,000 people were gathered within the firing lines, which had become the frontiers of Europe; if Germany could preserve this colossal creation throughout the war—as Frederick the Great had retained Silesia in the face of all Europe—a few years of peaceful organization under German direction would make this solid block of territory the seat of the greatest empire since the days of Rome, and give to the German Emperor the right to speak in the tone of the Cæsars.

The sole object of German military strategy, now, was to preserve this magnificent edifice, to repel the attacks from without, to seek to shorten the period of strain by counter-offensives. Two dangers and two alone threatened: the one was a military defeat, such as Leipsic, which should compel the Germans to quit their conquered districts, as Napoleon had been compelled in 1813 to retire from Germany, leaving his allies and subject nationalities to fall the willing or reluctant prey of his conquerors. The other peril was that too great prolongation of the war might so exhaust Germany as to render her incapable of harvesting where she had sown.

But of the two dangers only one was immediate. The German was still fascinated by the splendour of his achievement and enthralled by the brilliance of the prospect while his morale, his will to win, was unbroken. It was only necessary to repel the enemy at the gates of Mitteleuropa. It was only essential to preserve the edifice by campaigns which, whether defensive or offensive, should bring to nothing the efforts of the enemy to burst into the territory of the Central Powers, to isolate Bulgaria and Turkey from Austria and Germany, to bring Austria to her knees by invasion and defeat, to compel the German armies to retire from France and eastern Belgium, as a prelude to a retreat to the Rhine and to German territory.

And this danger had been fully met. More than this, the campaign

against Rumania had completed the task of rounding out the frontiers of Mitteleuropa. While Rumania was neutral and preserved her economic and political independence, the corridor from Austria to Bulgaria was narrow, the single railway passing through it from Vienna by Belgrade to Sofia and Constantinople was within striking distance of the Salonica army, while the Danube, the true artery of the Central European group, was commanded by Rumanian guns from the Iron Gate to the Black Sea.

But with Rumania crushed, the Danube—in Lincoln's vigorous phrase applied to the Mississippi after the fall of Vicksburg—"flowed unvexed to the sea." All the Rumanian railways were in German hands, and the interruption of traffic upon the Belgrade-Sofia route would have not the smallest effect upon German communications with her Balkan and Asiatic allies. Moreover, in taking Constanza, Germany had laid the foundation for future domination of the Black Sea. Once Russia should fall, the Black Sea would become—like the Baltic—a "closed sea," and the main trunk line descending from Germany to Constanza would be the route by which German troops would descend to pass the Black Sea and take foot upon its eastern shores, where the Caucasus railway begins its march to the frontiers of India.

Rumania, too, with its great oil resources and its wheat fields, was an important item in Pan-German calculations. It had escaped the German influence because the Rumanian Government and the Rumanian people alike had cherished ambitions which could be gratified only by the mutilation of Austrian and Hungarian frontiers. But these dreams had been extinguished in the defeats of the autumn, which had cost Rumania all but a shadow of her old independence and of her former territory. By contrast with the occupation of Rumania to the Sereth, the loss of territory in Bukowina, in Galicia, in Picardy, in the Isonzo region, was nothing. Not a foot of territory vital to the Mitteleuropa conception had been lost. When the campaign of 1916 came to its dismal close Germany had achieved all that was necessary for her to achieve, she had defended her conquests, she had increased the area of her empire at the single vulnerable point. In exchange,

she had sold to Russia, to Britain, and to France, certain territories of minor value at prices which were prohibitive—territories which she would in the east presently regain without cost to herself.

In point of fact, Germany had done more; she had substantially broken the Russian power for war; she had furnished to Austria the men, the guns, and the generals, with which the great Brusiloff offensive had been slowly beaten down. Had Rumania remained neutral the force thrown against that state might have been used against Russia and the result would have been equally disastrous, but in this field Germany could afford to wait. Events were ripening, Russia was disintegrating so rapidly that an attack, which might have encountered sharp preliminary resistance in 1916, would bring down the whole military edifice in swift ruin a year later.

The campaign of 1916 is, then, the final operation in the east. By it Germany at last accomplished the purpose she had undertaken in the autumn of 1914, when affairs in Galicia had recalled her from the still undecided conflict beside the Yser. In 1915 she had sought to crush Russia while holding firm on the west, and thus to preserve the opportunity to resume her offensive in France when the eastern campaign should be terminated. At the outset of 1916, misjudging the extent to which Russia had been crippled, she tried at Verdun, again seeking a western decision. Recalled to the east by Russia's victories and again condemned to the defensive in the west, she held her western positions with only minor losses of ground, while she disposed of Rumania and dealt to the Russian military power blows from which it was not to recover.

The Allied strategy had envisaged a concentric attack, that "encirclement," so much in German mouths, before the war and now translated into military terms. But when this strategy had been put into operation, Germany, while holding the western Allies, turned east and crushed Russia. At last her hands were becoming freed for the decisive campaign in the west. The next time she struck in France she would have no anxieties on her frontiers from the Baltic to the Black Sea. From the outset of the war Germany had said: "I must hold my west-

ern enemies while I defeat the eastern foe"; or, as at the Marne: "I must crush France before Russia can become dangerous." It had taken more time than the Germans had calculated upon, the effort and strain had been far more considerable, but in December, 1916, the end was at last in sight. The circle of steel and fire, so frequently described in Allied discussions of the war, was become—on one side at least, for half the circumference—little more than a ring of smoke which was destined to dissolve before another year had ended and leave Germany free to deal with France and with Britain. Unhappily for herself, while getting rid of an old enemy, Germany was to arouse a new antagonist and the United States was to appear in Russia's place before Germany could exploit the advantage gained by the elimination of the Slav.

As to the moral advantage of the 1916 campaign no one who recalls the effect upon the western world of the announcement of the fall of Bucharest can question that it belonged to Germany. The emotion was like that excited by the fall of Antwerp; neither event had great immediate military importance, but each was symbolical. The fall of Antwerp heralded the arrival of German armies at the coast, witnessed the extinction of Belgian independence, and testified to the complete falsity of the western view that Germany was beaten and in retreat. The fall of Bucharest was a decisive demonstration that German manpower and military strength had not been broken at Verdun or the Somme, that the Russian victories in Galicia had been inconclusive, that the war was no nearer a victorious conclusion. On the contrary, for the first time, whispers were heard in London and Paris that the war might, after all, be lost. The promises of victory immediate and decisive, vainly based upon the Verdun, Somme, and Russian campaigns, had raised hopes which, falling, gave place to fears destined to have grave substantiation in the next year.

But the fall of Bucharest had more than a moral value. For the first time the people of the western nations were able to gather something of a notion of the facts of the war. At last they were able to perceive that one nation and only one, their enemy, had a clear and ordered purpose. They saw in the results of two years and a half of war the

revelation of a guiding intelligence and an approximate appreciation of the material facts, but they saw it in their foe. They became acutely conscious of what they had hitherto only vaguely felt, namely, that neither their political leaders nor their military chiefs, not even their press and their pulpit, had seen facts as they were or pursued a definite objective with any singleness of purpose.

The public men had been deceived and had communicated their misapprehensions to their followers in statements which were grotesquely inexact. The soldiers had seen only their own little corners of a world strife and translated the taking of trenches or the retention of positions into the language of victors. The press had been muzzled; the censor had eliminated fact, and the more pliable organs had readily substituted fiction, pleasing alike to the censor and to the Government, but destitute of justification.

While Kaiser, Field Marshal, newspaper, and pulpit in Germany—in complete accord and with a single objective in mind—had marched in perfect unison, even in their lies and their mistakes carrying the German people with them—for a new victory invariably covered a previous miscalculation—the Allied statesmen quarrelled alike with themselves and with their generals; the pulpit was dumb, and the press blind or blindfolded, yet it was impossible that the masses should forever fail to see what was written on the map, what no press censorship could suppress or journalistic pen camouflage. In December, 1916, the Allied publics lost confidence in their leadership, civil and military alike. In their press they fell into a confusion which was to endure until the enemy's return to their very doors should, by arousing the instinct of self-preservation, restore determination and, by threatening military triumph, impose military unity upon his enemies. Thus, in every respect, the end of the campaign of 1916 was the passing of one phase and the opening of another.

III. EXEUNT OMNES

As the year closed the signs of impending transformations were unmistakably revealed in the removal both of allied politicians and soldiers.

After three campaigns neither the ministers nor the generals had won the war; they had, on the whole, revealed no such competence as suggested that they could win the war. Popular judgment ran against them and popular sentiment demanded a change.

Thus in December Asquith fell. In the previous year his party government had been replaced by a coalition ministry assembled from all parties and momentarily regarded as combining "all the talents." But in fact it combined nothing. Mr. Asquith remained master of phrase, and—assured of the loyalty of his great following in the House, where his personal popularity was enormous—Sir Edward Grey continued in the Foreign Office the personification of high-minded purpose and lofty principle; unaccompanied by the slightest grasp of essential facts. Neither Asquith nor Grey gave any evidence of appreciating, after two years of struggle, the European conditions out of which, without their smallest effective suspicion, a world war had developed.

For many months Britain had been looking to Lloyd George as the one man who might win the war in public office. His past mistakes and older animosities stood in his pathway; it was not willingly that a majority of the Unionists turned to the man whose name had been anathema but a few brief years before. Mr. Asquith suited English ideas precisely as he fitted into the dignity and tradition of the House of Commons; he was a typical Englishman; of his own class, he was an ideal party and parliamentary leader; but his strength in Parliament and in peace was his fatal weakness in war. He lacked decision, breadth of vision, force of character. His fatal phrase—"Wait and see"—became the epitome of a policy which permitted blunder after blunder until national confidence was shaken and the apprehension of defeat was abroad.

It was by a political shifting that Lloyd George at last overset his former chief and took his place as the leader of the British Empire in one of the most critical hours of its history. The men who gave him their votes begrudged them. Popularity among the members of Parliament, such as Mr. Asquith retained even in defeat, Lloyd George never possessed; he was not trusted by those who saw in his force, his

energy, his imagination, qualities without which victory now seemed impossible. But Lloyd George had the supreme merit of having been right when Asquith was wrong in recent instances; he had solved the munition problem, when British armies were fighting with shrapnel against high explosives. He was not a safe man, as England understood safety, but the "safe" men had brought her to the edge of defeat.

In France the Briand Ministry endured one more storm but its end was marked. A far abler man than Mr. Asquith and with a wholly different tradition, M. Briand had much of his charm and many of his weaknesses. In the great international conferences he had presided with dignity and grace, he was regarded as the one available man, by French politicians and publics, who still shrank from Clemenceau yet saw no other premier. In his political career Briand was nearer to Lloyd George; like the new British chief, he had risen from the ranks, and his pathway was marked by many conflicting courses and abrupt changes. But, though he was to outlast the winter storm, the defeats of 1916 had made his ultimate retirement inevitable. Prime Ministers, like generals, cannot survive defeat indefinitely.

In Russia a far more sordid struggle was going on. Early in the year Stuermer had come with his sinister purpose. By August, Sazonoff—the ablest of the foreign ministers of the Allied governments, the most loyal and earnest champion alike of his nation's interests and of Allied solidarity—had been forced out. The treason which was abroad was openly denounced in the Duma. Stuermer and his associates were deprived of their offices but their work was done, and the patriotic ministers who succeeded them were able to accomplish little before the Russian Revolution first overthrew them and then ruined the nation which Stuermer had betrayed.

On the military side the changes were even more considerable. Kitchener was dead. On the morrow of the Battle of Jutland he had set sail for Russia, and, in a stormy night, his ship, *Hampshire*, had touched a mine and sunk. In the manner of his death and the moment of his disappearance Lord Kitchener was fortunate. His great work had been done. About him had been built the new British army, and his

name and the glamour of his personality had contributed mightily to the construction. He had been a pillar upon which the British public had rested in the early days of defeat and anxiety. He had been for the English a symbol, and if, as Clemenceau once grimly remarked, "A symbol is a man about whom some people still believe what was never true," it was at least true that the value of Kitchener as a symbol in 1914 and 1915 could hardly be exaggerated.

It would be impossible to maintain that he had been equal to his opportunities or his previous reputation. The task was beyond him and his mistakes were many. The shell scandal had grown out of his blundering. He had lacked the courage to forbid the Gallipoli expedition, which he opposed. Had he lived, he would have been bound to share the retirement of other soldiers and statesmen, whose failure was not more undeniable. All this he escaped. Still, loved, admired, trusted, a figure unique in all British public life, he perished upon a mission of danger and of duty and, thus dying, remained a symbol, his hold upon public affection and confidence unshaken.

In France, December saw Joffre lay down the great burden which he had carried for three campaigns. In becoming Marshal of France the victor of the Marne became a memory, while still living. Verdun explained his removal, although there was added to Verdun the belief that the generalissimo was growing weary. Political influence played its part, for Joffre had never been popular with the Deputies, and Chantilly, where his headquarters were, had become a word of derision in the Chambre. But at bottom the demand for victory explained the retirement of a general whose services had been great and to whom the gratitude of the whole civilized world will always be due. In the gravest crisis of the whole war Joffre had saved France; he had turned back the German flood. He had sent his staff officers to prepare for a retirement behind the Loire before the Battle of the Marne was joined, resolved to continue the struggle and unshaken in his confidence in the destiny of his country and the devotion of his army.

To succeed Joffre, Nivelle was chosen, largely through the influence of the politicians. Nivelle came to his new post with the fame of the

latest Verdun success in everyone's eyes. He was hailed as the exponent of the offensive; he and not Pétain had been chosen because there was a feeling that, like Joffre, Pétain was too cautious. Nivelle's stay was short; it led to the cruel disappointment of the Aisne; but what was lost there was retrieved when Pétain succeeded Nivelle. Neither Pétain nor Nivelle captured the imagination of the world as did the heavy, awkward figure of "Papa" Joffre—a peasant of the peasants, sturdy, solid, with a clear brain and not a few other qualities of our own Grant. Like Kitchener he left a place that was not to be filled, although, unlike Kitchener, he had earned enduring fame upon the battlefield by winning one of the decisive struggles of human history.

In Germany the changes were military. Falkenhayn fell as a consequence of failure at Verdun; Hindenburg came west, bringing with him the mysterious Ludendorff who was henceforth to grow upon the imagination of friend and foe until the day would come that he would appear to be Hindenburg, in fact. The arrival of Hindenburg was the signal for popular rejoicing in Germany, for no other soldier had won the same popularity; even the Kaiser's hold upon the admiration of his subjects was overborne by that of the victor of the Masurian Lakes and the conqueror of Tannenberg, and at this very moment a novel, describing the invasion of Britain by the old Field Marshal and his entrance into London, was selling by the million copies.

IV. FRANCIS JOSEPH DIES

And as if to give final emphasis to the transformation which was coming on November 22, Francis Joseph, the aged Emperor of Austria, died. Sixty-eight years had passed since the Countess Karolyi, whose son had been one of the victims of the executions following the Hungarian revolt, thus cursed the young Emperor, Francis Joseph:

"May Heaven and Hell blast his happiness! May his family be exterminated! May he be smitten in the persons of those he loves! May his life be wrecked! May his children be brought to ruin!"

Rarely in human history has a curse been more completely fulfilled than in the case of the dead Emperor. His brother, Maximilian, died

before a firing squad in Mexico; his sister-in-law lost her reason as a consequence. His only son perished in the shameful tragedy of Meyerling. His wife was murdered at Geneva. As for his other relatives, the tragedies and follies of the archdukes had long been a European byword, and the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian throne, at Serajevo, two years earlier, had been but the last in the long series of family and dynastic tragedies as well as the signal for the world catastrophe.

Louis XIV covered the span between the Thirty Years' War and the emergence of Modern Europe living under the new system of the balance of power. Francis Joseph, when he came to Schönbrunn as master, found about him the memories of a Napoleonic occupation not yet remote; he lived to the hour when a new Napoleonic struggle had convulsed the world.

Francis Joseph was thus the last remaining monarchic link with the Nineteenth Century. When he was young Metternich still ruled in Vienna and maintained his losing fight against the ideas and principles of the French Revolution. The great figures of the fight against Napoleon were many of them alive. When he came to power the revolution of 1848 was still in progress and men were striving to restore and to preserve the liberties of the earlier and greater French Revolution. He was still young when Cavour won Italian unity, when Bismarck created modern Germany, and both achievements were the consequences of Austrian defeats. William I, Victoria, Louis Napoleon, Victor Emmanuel; these had been his contemporaries but had now all become shades. The world he had known had also vanished. Republican institutions had returned to France and the ideas of the French Revolution, hateful to all his world, still continued to march triumphantly forward.

In the threescore and eight years during which he had reigned Francis Joseph saw all of Europe, save only his own realm, made over. The war with Napoleon III drove him out of Italy as far as Venetia; the war with Prussia expelled him from Germany and from Venetia. From that moment onward Austria declined visibly; hers was no longer

one of the dominating voices in the European councils; she became more and more the vassal of that Prussia whose rise she had opposed so long in the Eighteenth Century. For a full generation Europe had a phrase to describe the future, to express the conviction of the time when the inevitable European catastrophe was to come: "When Francis Joseph dies," men had said wisely and sadly for many, many years. But now Francis Joseph's life flickered out after the Great War had shaken the Continent for more than two years and while the future remained still obscure and the fate of his ancient empire still in doubt.

Francis Joseph was not a great emperor like Napoleon, nor yet a great king like Louis XIV. He had no wide outlook upon world affairs. He was a typical product of the Hapsburg Family, whose reactionary ideas he shared and served. When he was young the theories of Metternich ruled, and he accepted them. He fought to prevent the unity of Italy and the rise of Modern Germany. He sought to enslave the Balkans as his predecessors had endeavoured to enslave Italy. Yet Francis Joseph resembled Louis XIV in his fidelity to the task that had come to him unsought. "Farewell to my youth," he is said to have exclaimed when he was suddenly summoned to mount the Hapsburg throne as the last hope of an ancient race fallen upon evil days. No man ever worked harder, no man ever devoted himself more unsparingly to the business of ruling. He did not create, he did not transform, but he did preserve; he did ultimately, by dint of his devotion to what he conceived to be the welfare of his people, build up a tradition and construct a legend.

The time came when the Emperor himself was the real unifying element in the disintegrating structure of his empire. The Hungarians forgave him and respected him. He found affection even among the Slavs, whose unhappy lot he did not much mitigate, whose racial ambitions he opposed at all times. When he took the throne the executioner was busy over all Austria and in his name; yet, as the years passed, he came to be loved, reverenced, honoured by his people as the sole barrier against revolution and anarchy and as a sovereign who was literally the father of his people, however narrow his vision and limited his ideas.

When death at last overtook him, the first thought in all minds was for the future. Francis Joseph was the centre about which gathered all that was national and independent in Austrian life. His family was older than the Hohenzollern, and there clung to it a dignity not yet acquired by the latest ruler of a house which was but a small German affair two centuries ago, when the Hapsburg princes mounted the throne of the Holy Roman Empire in regular rotation.

Would the passing of Francis Joseph be followed by the permanent subordination of the Hapsburg to the Hohenzollern? Would Berlin, joining hands with Budapest, reduce Vienna to a place of relative unimportance? Would an Allied victory in the future bring about that dissolution of the Austrian Empire so many times threatened, so often imminent? Already the meaning of an Allied victory was not hidden. Galicia, Bukowina, Transylvania, Temesvar, Croatia, and Slavonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, Istria and the Trentino; these had been marked by the foes of Austria and beyond them lay the ever-present threat of Hungarian secession.

Like Louis XIV, Francis Joseph passed at a dark hour, leaving a plain heritage of danger and suffering for his people. But his own suffering had perhaps surpassed that of any of his subjects. "Fate is not kind to old men," Louis XIV said to one of his marshals returning after a disaster; and Fate had been singularly unkind to Francis Joseph. Yet through all the storm and stress of national and personal grief he had lived on. There was a legend that in all his last months his active mind had followed on the map the progress of the war, but that memory had so far failed him that he had continued to believe that it was the Prussians, and not the Russians, that his armies were fighting.

In his later days Sieyès was once asked what he did during The Terror, and his answer was: "*Mon Dieu! j'ai vécu.*" And if one should seek to sum up in a phrase the life work of Francis Joseph, one would say of his empire that, through him and under him, it had lived; for sixty-eight years it had survived a ruin that seemed imminent when he mounted the throne and certainly seemed no nearer on his

death than at his accession. The old Emperor was not a thinker; he was not a leader; but he had become an institution. And in later days he had come to seem the immortal emperor of a dying empire.

Men the world over asked whether the passing of Francis Joseph made for peace or for war. Actually, it was hard to see how his death could affect the situation. The flames which were still mounting higher and higher were beyond the control of one man or of many men; it might be doubted whether William II himself could influence the course of the gigantic struggle now. In truth, the event to which the world had looked forward with apprehension so long—the death of Francis Joseph—seemed now, when at last death had come to him, to be but a minor detail in the tragic history of his country and of all European countries.

As for the young archduke who succeeded to the Dual Monarchy, he did not find its fortunes more desperate than had Francis Joseph. About him the world knew next to nothing—less than it knew of that other archduke who had perished at Serajevo; but now that races and nations were struggling, with a full consciousness of the issues at stake, it was hard to believe that this sovereign could, in any large way, shape the course of human history. As for Francis Joseph, it would seem that the story was told in the fact that an old and tired King had at last laid down a burden beyond the strength of any man, after having borne it bravely and with dignity, if never with supreme skill or enlightened statesmanship.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE FIRST GERMAN PEACE OFFENSIVE

I

GERMANY'S PROPOSAL

On December 12, six days after the fall of Bucharest, the German Government—with a dramatic suddenness which took all the Allied statesmen and peoples by surprise—proposed a conference for the exchange of views and the formulation of conditions on which might be terminated the world conflagration. The text of the German Note addressed by Germany and her allies to all the hostile nations was as follows:

The most terrific war ever experienced in history has been raging for the last two years and a half over a large part of the world—a catastrophe which thousands of years of common civilization were unable to prevent, and which injures the most precious achievements of humanity.

Our aims are not to shatter or annihilate our adversaries. In spite of our consciousness of our military and economic strength and our readiness to continue the war (which has been forced upon us) until the bitter end, if necessary; at the same time prompted by the desire to avoid further bloodshed and make an end to the atrocities of war, the four allied powers propose to enter forthwith into peace negotiations.

The propositions which they bring forward for such negotiations—and which have for their object a guarantee of the existence, the honour, and the liberty of evolution for their nations—are, according to their firm belief, an appropriate basis for the establishment of a lasting peace.

The four allied powers have been obliged to take up arms to defend justice and the liberty of national evolution. The glorious deeds of our armies have in no way altered their purpose. We always maintained the firm belief that our own rights and justified claims in no way controvert the rights of these nations.

The spiritual and material progress which was the pride of Europe at the beginning of the Twentieth Century is threatened with ruin. Germany and her allies—Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey—have given proof of their unconquerable strength in this struggle. They have gained gigantic advantages over adversaries superior in number and war material. Our lines stand unshaken against ever-repeated attempts made by armies.

The last attack in the Balkans has been rapidly and victoriously overcome. The most recent events have demonstrated that further continuance of the war will not result in breaking the resistance of our forces, and the whole situation with regard to our troops justifies our expectation of further successes.

If in spite of this offer of peace and reconciliation the struggle should go on, the four allied powers are resolved to continue to a victorious end, but they disclaim responsibility for this before humanity and history. The Imperial Government of —— [here is inserted the name of the neutral power addressed in each instance] is requested to bring this communication to the knowledge of the Government of —— [here are inserted the names of the belligerents].

On this same day, in a crowded Chamber, the Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, explained the German peace proposal to the Reichstag, in this memorable speech. He said (in part):

In a deep moral and religious sense of duty toward humanity, the Emperor now considers that the moment has come for official action toward peace.

His majesty, therefore, in complete harmony and in common with our allies, decided to propose to the hostile powers to enter into peace negotiations. This morning I transmitted a note to this effect to all the hostile powers, through the representatives of those powers which are watching over our interests and rights in the hostile states. I asked the representatives of Spain, the United States, and Switzerland to forward this note.

The same procedure has been adopted to-day in Vienna, Constantinople, and Sofia. Other neutral states and His Holiness the Pope have been similarly informed.

After reading the note addressed to the Entente Allies the Chancellor said further:

Gentlemen: in August, 1914, our enemies challenged the superiority of our power in the World War. To-day we raise the question of peace, which is a question of humanity. We await the answer of our enemies with that serenity of mind which is guaranteed to us by our exterior and interior strength and by our clear conscience.

If our enemies decline to end the war, if they wish to take upon themselves the world's heavy burden of all these terrors which hereafter will follow them even in the least and smallest homes, every German heart will burn in scared wrath against our enemies, who are unwilling to stop human slaughter that their plans of conquest may continue.

In a fateful hour we took a fateful decision. It has been saturated with the blood of hundreds of thousands of our sons and brothers who gave their lives for the safety of their homes.

Human wits and human understanding are unable to reach to the extreme and last questions in the struggle of nations, which has unveiled all the terrors of earthly life but also the grandeur of human courage and human will in ways never seen before.

God will be the judge. We can proceed upon our way without fear and unashamed. We are ready for fighting and we are ready for peace.

Finally, the Kaiser notified his commanding generals of the German peace offer, while informing them that it was still uncertain what reception it would meet. The Emperor's order was addressed also "To

my navy which, in the common fight, has staked all its strength, loyally and effectively." The order follows:

"Soldiers: In agreement with the sovereigns of my allies and with consciousness of victory, I have made an offer of peace to the enemy. Whether it will be accepted is still uncertain. Until that hour arrives, you must fight on."

II. PRESIDENT WILSON INTERVENES

On December 18 the President of the United States, after some obvious hesitation, addressed to each of the belligerents a Note, which, in effect, asked for a restatement—by each—of its purposes. Written in part before the German Note, although not without a measure of information as to the imminence of this proposal, the President's communication gave obvious strength to the German manœuvre and as such was hailed in Germany and viewed with a measure of resentment in Allied capitals. Nor was this resentment lessened by the speech made by the President to the Senate, on January 22, in which he uttered the phrase, "peace without victory," which at once astounded and angered the nations fighting Germany, who had already found cause for grief in the fact that, in his original note, the President had seemed to imply that both groups of nations were seeking the same objects—thus placing the Germans and their opponents on common ground.

An examination of the President's document belongs to the next volume, where America's own relation to the war will be discussed. The President's Note was an American affair, it had relation to American conditions, and its international aspects were of relatively less importance. But it is significant as marking the extreme point of the divorce between American and Allied sympathies as represented by official utterance. From January, 1917, onward, the course of American policy and purpose was to run rapidly toward a parallel direction with that of Allied policy and interest, and what was said in December and January was quickly forgotten in the enthusiasm excited by what was done in February, April, and June.

Yet we have now to look at things as they then appeared to the world. Germany had made a peace gesture, promptly supported in



Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

STATUES SAVED FROM ARRAS CATHEDRAL

Stored in a tiny church far behind the Canadian lines, works of art that could be removed from the cathedral were saved from the enemy's shells



Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

ONE OF THE MIRACLES OF THE WAR

Interior of a church, showing how the statue of the Blessed Virgin and a saint escaped destruction though tons of débris fell all around them



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

THE MIRACLE OF MONTAUBAN

"Let me tell you of a miracle. We came upon it suddenly and the roots of my hair stirred coldly with a sense of the unseen Presence. The Virgin of Montauban stood amidst a chaos of destruction, serene, benign, the only thing that the shells had spared."—Private letter from a soldier



Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

THE FALLEN BELL AT NEUVE CHAPELLE

All observers of the war have reported case after case of what could only be deliberate destruction of French and Belgian churches, even when there was no possible pretext of "military necessity"



Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

A TRIUMPH OF GERMAN GUNNERY

The crucifix was thrown down by a shell, but the figure remained intact



Photograph by Western Newspaper Union

AN AMAZING OVERSIGHT

A bell was left behind in the wreck of a church in a small village near Lens. Every other bit of fine metal had been sacked even to stew-pans and fastenings of doors. One official loot gatherer must have been winged at his work



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

THE PUBLIC SQUARE AND CATHEDRAL AT YPRES

Ypres has suffered much. In the vortex of the fighting for several years, it was captured and recaptured by both sides. But its framework still stands, and it can be repaired



Photograph by Underwood & Underwood

KING ALBERT'S CASTLE NEAR YPERN IN RUINS

Castle Hollbecke, one of the residences of King Albert of Belgium, partially wrecked. Some of the most stubbornly fought battles of the war took place here

fact, although neither in intention nor language, by the course of the President of the United States. As in war, so in diplomacy, the initiative is of priceless value and the Germans had secured the offensive by a surprise attack, supported at the critical moment by the recently reëlected President of the most powerful neutral state in the world.

To accept the German peace proposal did not for a moment enter the heads of the men charged with the direction of Allied policies, but to reject it was to run obvious risks—the risk of giving to the German the appearance of moderation, as contrasted with his opponents, and the peril of flouting the President of the United States and at once driving American sympathy and American influence to the German side. The moment, therefore, was critical, and although the larger perils were avoided, certain other hardly less serious dangers were not —and perhaps could not be—avoided. Since the German peace offensive could only be repulsed, it was inevitable that the Allies should be condemned to bear the responsibility for the prolongation of the war in the eyes of the German people and in those of a certain section of their own peoples.

III. WHAT IT MEANT

We come now to the necessary analysis of the German manœuvre. What were the purposes of the Kaiser and his advisers in proposing peace negotiations at the moment when the taking of Bucharest had restored their military prestige and placed them in the strongest position they had occupied since the Verdun defeat—and the Somme offensive had shaken their hopes and ruined their plans for a military decision?

Wise, after the fact, we may at once exclude the interpretation immediately placed upon the German move by many contemporary observers. It was not fear of impending defeat, excited by recent events upon the west front, which led the Kaiser to take his momentous step. No idea of defeat entered the head of the German rulers and soldiers in 1916 or in the following year. The west—unable to perceive the eastern situation as it was, incapable of judging Russian facts and Ger-

man truths—saw in the peace proposal the obvious attempt of a starving and beaten Germany to transfer the struggle from the battle field to the green table and seek to win by other weapons the victory already lost in the military sphere.

Nothing could have been more inexact. It was the settled conviction of the German Government and the German people that the war had been won, and history will not adjudge this conviction half as absurd as the views held by Allied publics and voiced by Allied statesmen, concerning German prospects. Abroad, German arms were still strong and Germany had just won a shining victory. At home, despite discomforts and real hardships, the morale of the German people was stronger than that of the people of Britain or France, as the events of the next year were to disclose. It was not to avoid defeat that the Kaiser proposed peace by negotiation; this much is unmistakable.

Was it with the idea of seeking, in a negotiation conducted in some neutral capital, to separate the Allies? Did the German, in fact, expect, or actually much desire, an international conference? Again the answer must be in the negative. The German knew the sentiments of those who directed the policies of France and Britain. He realized, as every one in the world then realized, that neither the French nor the British Government would or could consent to peace negotiations at that moment. The replies which ultimately came from all enemy nations were clearly anticipated. On the morrow of the German peace proposal, despite the temporary disarray of Allied statesmanship, there was no doubt anywhere expressed as to what the response would be.

We may then at once dismiss the notion that the German manœuvre had in it any intent to bring peace by negotiation. The German did not expect this result, he did not desire this result. He now possessed all that he had hoped to acquire by the war—save the decisive victory itself; but he still regarded the decisive victory as not impossible, provided that he could destroy the morale of the peoples with whom he was fighting. And between a decisive victory and a long-drawn-out negotiation in which he would be overborne by numbers if not by brains, the German had every reason to prefer to stick to the pursuit of a decision by arms.

In analyzing the German motives we have to examine both the domestic conditions and the foreign circumstances that were in the mind of the Kaiser and his advisers in December. As far as the domestic conditions were concerned the German people believed themselves victorious, as they still believed themselves the victims of a European conspiracy. But, after so many victories, they could not understand the prolongation of the war and they saw, in the fact that their armies were everywhere fighting on foreign soil, a strange contradiction to the German Government's repeated assertion that the war was one of defence.

It was essential to demonstrate to the German people, if it could be done without damage, that the responsibility for the continuation of the struggle was not Germany's. If a proposal of peace, too vague, too impalpable to lead to anything, could be put forth by German statesmen and rejected by the representatives of Allied nations; if the rejection were accompanied by bitter words and fresh denunciation or by the formulation of terms incompatible with the views of the German people (who believed themselves victorious and, while eager for peace, had not the smallest intention of accepting anything but a victorious peace), then there would result an immediate hardening of the resolution of the German people; the Government would gain new support; it would absolve itself from the single reproach now beginning to be directed at it, namely, that it was responsible, not for the war, but for the failure of the war to reach a logical conclusion.

This was the home manœuvre—important, but not controlling.

IV. THE RUSSIAN MANŒUVRE

But it is to the foreign field that we must look to gather any accurate notion of German designs. First of all, the German proposal envisaged the Russian situation. In the Muscovite Empire the Germans had corrupted the bureaucracy and subsidized the revolutionists. Russian affairs were marching to complete and inescapable ruin. The bureaucracy had made its bargain with the Germans. The fall of Rumania—betrayed by Russia, by Stuermer—was the price the Russian Cabinet had paid in advance for a German peace proposal, recognizing

that only by obtaining peace abroad could it resort to repression at home and save the system by which it lived.

True a new ministry, patriotic in its purposes, had succeeded Stuermer; but the harm had been done. And even though the new ministry should, as it did, repulse the peace proposal, it was only necessary for the Germans to redouble their efforts to stimulate into action their subsidized agents of revolution. Russia was exhausted; she had neither the moral, the military, nor the material resources out of which to build another campaign. If the bureaucracy could not provide peace, the Revolution would. Peace—peace at any price, on any terms—this was the desire of the people.

And Germany offered peace. Therefore, nothing was more inevitable than that the Revolution, passing rapidly from the control of the relatively restricted patriotic group, should fall into the hands of those extremists, many of them Germany's tools, who undertook to give the people what they desired most. The patriotic ministry which took command at the first stage of the Revolution, and Kerensky, who succeeded, might seek to preserve the solidarity of the Alliance with the western nations, but the mass of the people cared only for an end of the struggle, and since the Czar had allied himself with France, with Britain, and with Italy, and as these nations insisted upon war, the Russian extremists turned without hesitation or compunction to Germany, who had offered peace and continued to offer peace.

The main concern of Germany at all times in the first three campaigns had been to dispose of one of her larger foes, to win, in the east or in the west, a decision which would permit her to concentrate all her energies and all her resources in a single field. Three campaigns had passed without the attainment of this object, but it could be obtained without a fourth campaign if Russian military power were overthrown by revolution or if the Russian Government should, of its own will, decide to save itself at home by giving its subjects what they desired, even at the cost of breaking faith with the western nations. This was what the Stuermer Ministry had sought to do It had fallen, after performing only half its task, after having merely supplied, by the

betrayal of Rumania, a basis for peace by negotiation. Since the ministry that succeeded was patriotic and loyal, Germany would now turn to the other end of the line; she would go from the Cabinet to the *canaille*, from the palace to the gutter.

We shall see, in the analysis of the events of 1917, how completely the Germans subordinated military to diplomatic operations on its eastern front; how they substituted intrigue for heavy artillery; how they lured Russia, one step at a time, to ultimate ruin, and their purpose accomplished—they were at last free to turn westward, having destroyed the Russian nation and written at Brest-Litovsk a treaty more sweeping than that which Napoleon formulated with respect of Prussia at Tilsit. But until the Russian ruin was achieved, Germany steadfastly adhered to the peace offensive, and it is by the methods and by the result of this campaign, as they were later disclosed, that we must analyze the German peace manœuvre that began in December, 1916.

In sum, and looking for the moment at Russia, alone, Germany employed her peace operations exactly as she was accustomed to use her heavy artillery, to prepare the way for her infantry attack. She was not seeking peace but victory; she was not striving for an arrangement by mutual accommodation because she was still in the mood of a conqueror. A gesture of peace would placate certain elements at home, but it was not necessary, yet, to placate them. A peace gesture would serve to deceive the weary Russian people, to beguile the mad extremists, it would aid the revolutionists, an influential element of whom were in German pay. But it would be but a prelude; the infantry would advance exactly as after artillery preparation. And this is precisely what did happen at Brest-Litovsk, when a disarmed and helpless Russia confronted the essential Prussian, at last drawing his "good German sword" from beneath the white mantle of Peace, where it had been hidden but ready at all times.

V. THE AMERICAN ASPECT

If the Russian objective was more obvious, it was not less clear that Germany also aimed at achieving certain results in America. In

recent months there had been a superficial improvement in German-American relations. The tense situation following the *Sussex* outrage in the winter had given way to a relative calm when Germany had accepted the terms insisted upon by the United States Government with respect of submarine operations. There had been an interruption in the incidents which had been so frequent in the previous year and the danger of a break with America seemed past.

But the German Government was already completing its preparations for that unlimited submarine warfare that was to be the opening move in the campaign of 1917. The submarine weapon had not been abandoned because of the success of the British navy in dealing with the U-boat. Nor had it been abandoned out of fear of American complications. In fact, it had not been abandoned at all but simply interrupted. When the Germans had made their concessions to the United States, they had made them because, at the moment, they did not have a sufficient fleet of U-boats to make a persistence in the campaign—with the probable entrance of the United States into the war as a consequence—profitable.

From that moment onward, however, the German leaders had concentrated their energies upon the construction of a fleet which should be adequate; the moment was approaching when the fleet would be ready; and Germany was prepared to lay aside the mask when that moment came. But even though she was willing to risk involving herself in war with the United States, Germany was still eager to avoid this increase in the number of her foes, if possible. Her strategy with the United States at all times had been to postpone to the last moment the entrance of that nation, but there had been a perception in Berlin that the postponement could not be indefinite.

In the peace offensive Germany saw a chance to gain a further postponement. While she exaggerated the American desire to remain outside the area of conflict; while she underestimated popular sentiment and Presidential firmness once a direct issue should be made, she still calculated—not overblindly—that, should she make a peace proffer and should this proffer be rejected by her enemies, then the

consequence might be to turn American sentiment against the Allies; saddle upon them, in American eyes, the responsibility for the prolongation of the struggle; and thus lead the American people and the American Government to tolerate a new submarine campaign as the last resort of a German people, pacifically inclined but fighting for its life with implacable enemies resolved to resist all overtures for peace.

The course of the President, in calling upon the belligerent nations for a restatement of purposes, after the German Note had been issued, unquestionably contributed to convincing the German Government that its manœuvre had been successful in America. In this it was mistaken. American opinion was taking form and the American Government, despite the President's clear determination to leave no step unturned to avoid war if it could be avoided, was getting on to firm ground. There was no chance now that the American people would submit to German prescriptions as to how and when they should use the sea. The long nightmare of German intrigue and German outrage in the United States was about at an end.

Yet the facts, as they afterward disclosed themselves, must not blind us to the motives of the Germans, motives which were the natural result of a reasonable interpretation of the American attitude. The German was making his best bid to keep America out of the war, just as he was making his best effort to eliminate Russia. To accomplish both these things would be to prepare the way for military victory; to postpone American entrance would, not impossibly, lead to the same result. There was no other appeal which could be made to America, and the peace offensive was bound to have a profound effect; it was bound to deceive, it was bound to confuse; it might—there was a chance—arouse American resentment at Allied persistence, at British and French obstinacy, which would give Germany the free hand she wanted for her submarine campaign. The explanation of the purpose is revealed in the direction of German intrigue and German propaganda in America at the time.

In its American phase the German peace offensive was a failure;

America did enter the war on the Allied side, but the American aspect of the German operation is none the less interesting and important.

VI. IN ENGLAND AND FRANCE

The peace offensive, in its British and French aspects, was, however, more serious immediately and eventually than in America. In American politics the old alliance between "the Puritan and the Blackleg" was not unfamiliar; in Russia the German had sought to achieve his purpose by harnessing the Court and the gutter to his car; in Great Britain and in France his tactics were similar; he made allies alike out of idealism and selfishness, his ends were served by those who sought peace for reasons which were above suspicion or reproach and by those who were seeking to advance or preserve selfish interests at the sacrifice of all else.

In the first three years of the war the people of the Allied nations believed, and their leaders and press told them, that there was a gulf between the people and the rulers of Germany. The legend, eagerly seized upon and steadily accepted, pictured the German people as ever on the point of throwing off its masters and seeking peace through the medium of that form of democracy familiar to the western nations. The truth was quite different. The German people were not in revolt against their masters nor was there as yet any cleavage between people and government, between parties and the Kaiser.

But the situation in the Allied countries was not the same. There was discord, there was lack of common purpose and equal determination. In England and France there was an element—made up of men of commanding integrity and unquestioned ability and intelligence—who opposed war as such, who had opposed the entrance of their country into the present war, who saw in their own nation's cause, its war aims, and its international policies, faults as grave as those disclosed by the German programme. Some of these believed any peace better than every form of war; more of them believed that the war was unnecessary and that, but for the chauvinism in Allied quarters, it could have been avoided. All of them accepted the German peace proposal as

made in good faith and began an industrious campaign to force their governments to meet the German suggestion.

The result was an instant outburst of criticism and denunciation, not of the enemy, but of the governments of the men who uttered the condemnation and—which was worse for Allied solidarity—of the purposes of Allied nations. Distrust of Russia was a long-standing British tradition and, while Russia still stood, Russian ambitions toward the Near East were a target for attack. French claims upon Alsace-Lorraine were assailed, Italian ambitions along the Adriatic were denounced. The assertion was made, repeated, proclaimed, that all nations were equally selfish and all war aims coloured by the same international selfishness. The demand for a restatement of Allied war aims, coupled with an insistence upon the elimination from these war aims of all territorial claims, however just, was heard on all sides, and the Allied cause was weakened in the eyes of those who were bearing the burdens of the defence of that cause—not by the enemy abroad, but by the friend at home or the ally in a friendly nation.

For the first time there was a palpable decline in the moral vitality of the Allied publics. And this was what the German had sought. He had framed his peace proposals to catch the emotion and the sentiment of the pacifist and of the idealist; he transferred the discussion from the area of his own actual misdeeds to the real or imaginary purpose of the Allies to imitate in some lesser degree, not his crimes but his territorial aspirations; and, in doing this, he temporarily deprived his opponents of that moral initiative that they had possessed from the moment when his invasion of Belgium had aroused the moral indignation of all non-Teutonic civilization.

At the other end of the rope he appealed to the selfish, to the rich and the powerful, who saw the war undermining the existing social system, eating up their fortunes in war taxes, levelling all the barriers of class, transferring from Capital to Labour the real control of industry and of nations. His statesmen and his propaganda artfully emphasized the approaching destruction of wealth and of "Kultur"—the ruin of European civilization. Nor did his appeals have less attraction for

the labouring classes, whose war with the capitalists had been halted by the world struggle, who feared for the privileges and rights which they had newly acquired and saw in each governmental requirement a new invasion of their recently acquired powers.

Lastly, and this is of capital importance, the German peace proposal fell upon a war-weary world. The agonies and sacrifices of three campaigns had been beyond description; for millions in the trenches and in the factories, and for the other millions who suffered in the persons of those they loved, the strain had been terrific. And for this strain there was no apparent relief in any immediate future. Victory no longer seemed at hand; it was to seem more and more remote in the next eighteen months. In invaded France, in blockaded Britain, human endurance had its limits; men and women were approaching the point where, if honourable peace could be obtained, prolongation of the war, for any purpose, seemed a crime.

It was the mission of the German propaganda to create in the minds of the pacifists and the idealists the notion that peace—with all their ideals and dreams assured—was to be had; that the obstacle was not the German Government but their own statesmen. It was the purpose of German propaganda to convince Capital that an escape from impending perils was available, if only the leaders of Allied countries would lay aside a mad pursuit of impossible military triumphs and listen to the voice of reason. It was the mission of German propaganda to shake the confidence of Allied publics in their governments—of Allied peoples in the honesty of purpose of their statesmen. It was the mission of German propaganda to play upon the agony, the credulity, the selfishness, and the idealism of men of enemy nations, to the end that the spirits of these peoples should weaken, that the desire for peace should overwhelm the determination to achieve victory.

And while Germany's manœuvres seduced the idealism it satisfied the selfishness and purchased the venality of the nations at war with her. A huge defeatist manœuvre was carried on in France coincident with the idealistic campaign conducted in Britain. This was to be the true campaign of 1917 and it was to bring the Allies, in

whose number America would be included, to the very edge of ruin, before the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk revealed the German as he was and disclosed the weak, the wicked, and the unfortunate elements of the Russian Revolution in circumstances which the western world could not mistake.

VII. REJECTED

Such, in substance, was the first German peace offensive. The German proposal was promptly rejected, its rejection was contained in speeches by British, French, and Italian prime ministers; even the Russian Government, now brought to the edge of ruin, repulsed the offer for which its predecessor had striven. In due course of time the Allies returned to the President of the United States an adequate but not unambiguous explanation of their war aims, which he accepted with the good grace which was required. Meanwhile, the German press and the German statesmen signalized the rejection of their peace proposal by declarations intended to convince their own public and the publics of the enemy nations that their sincerity had been beyond question and the responsibility for the prolongation of the struggle rested with the nations whose determination to destroy the German people was revealed in their brusque rejection of Germany's generous offer to lay aside the rights of a victor and treat with her enemies as with equals.

But with the speeches of the statesmen, German or Allied, we need have little concern. The Germans spoke wisely and for a purpose, the Allied orators foolishly, because they only partly fathomed the meaning of the German manœuvre and were as blind to conditions within their own countries as they were misled as to conditions within Germany. With the rejection of the German proposal the Allied press celebrated the repulse of an enemy attack, convinced that such danger as there had been was abolished by the incantations of the orators in the several parliaments.

The truth was otherwise. The German peace offensive had not failed; on the contrary, it had undermined Allied solidarity and shaken

the morale of Allied publics; it had loosed centrifugal forces which were to operate with ever-increasing energy. It was a beginning, not an end; it was the artillery preparation before the infantry attack, and the infantry attack would not only come, but would temporarily break the home front. Had the German been as successful in America as he was in Europe, the Allies would have lost the war. It was the failure of the German peace offensive in America, the failure to prevent or postpone American entrance, which saved the compromised situation, when Russia had collapsed, France been beaten at the Aisne, Britain's splendid young army decimated in the Flanders bogs, when defeatism and war weariness had swept over the western nations and the German peace offensive had at last prepared the way for the resumption of the military offensive by Ludendorff in March, 1918.

"Germany must squeeze her enemies with a pair of pincers. The German armies must continue to fight vigorously, while the German Socialists encourage and stimulate pacifism among Germany's enemies." This was the programme of a German Socialist. This is the epitome of the first and of all other German offensives. Germany was seeking to win the war by all means available. The Peace offensive was a method. December, 1916, was an appropriate moment to invoke this method. Nations which could not at once be conquered by German ruthlessness might be disarmed by their own idealism.

And with the launching of the German peace offensive the history of the year 1916 ends. In a sense this German manœuvre belongs rather to 1917 than to the preceding year. It was the first step in a new campaign rather than the last one in an old. It was the preface to the Russian collapse, to the Italian defeat at Caporetto, to the German victories of the spring of 1918. It was an attack upon the "home front" after two great repulses upon the battle front. But it was a logical and natural climax to the campaign of 1916, in which both contending parties had failed to achieve a decision and in which the Allies were left without a policy or a purpose, aghast at the Rumanian disaster, humiliated at the sacrifice of another little state whose doom they had not been able to foresee or to avert.

The German had regained the military initiative at Bucharest; by his peace offensive he had now, for the moment, grasped the moral initiative. Both had been won in 1916, both were the results of his successes. He would make effective use of both advantages. He could hope and did hope that, combined, they would enable him to win the war. In this he was mistaken; but again the Allies would escape utter defeat by a narrow margin and once more their blindness would bring bitter disappointment and deadly peril. They were still failing; the German was still winning, and, as the year closed, had shifted the attack to a new field and taken his enemy unprepared and unawares. For eighteen months he would be able to exploit this new triumph and it would bring him again to the Marne, before France rallied and America arrived, before British and French idealism and pacifism were silenced by Brest-Litovsk and a common peril restored the home front in the Allied countries and thus laid the foundations for victory in the field.

The German peace offensive was the third German attack upon the western nations. It was repulsed, but not before it had once more brought the Allied cause to the brink of ruin. And it did complete the work of Hindenburg and Mackensen in the east. It opened a campaign longer than that at Verdun, and, all things considered, more costly to the Allies than that at the Somme. With these two great operations it divides the interest in the history of 1916. With the rejection by the Allies of the German proposal there ends, not a campaign, but a period. With the new year were to appear new leaders, new soldiers, new issues, and new problems. And yet, in December, 1916, only Germany detected signs of the impending change. She saw only the material side, but such vision as she had was to permit her to go forward far on the road to victory before she encountered at the Marne and for the second time, a spiritual rebirth beyond her power to conquer.

Mr. Simonds's History of the Progress of the War Will Be Carried Forward in the Succeeding Volumes

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I

MY TRIP TO VERDUN*

GENERAL PÉTAIN FACE TO FACE

THE MEN WHO HOLD THE LINE—WHAT THEIR FACES TOLD OF THE PAST AND THE FUTURE OF FRANCE

By FRANK H. SIMONDS

My road to Verdun ran through the Elysée Palace, and it was to the courtesy and interest of the President of the French Republic that I owed my opportunity to see the battle for the Meuse city at close range. Already through the kindness of the French General Staff I had seen the Lorraine and Marne battlegrounds and had been guided over these fields by officers who had shared in the opening battles that saved France. But Verdun was more difficult; there is little time for caring for the wandering correspondent when a decisive contest is going forward, and quite naturally the General Staff turned a deaf ear to my request.

Through the kindness of one of the many Frenchmen who gave time and effort to make my pilgrimage a success I was at last able to see M. Poincaré. Like our own American President, the French Chief Magistrate is never interviewed, and I mention this audience simply because it was one more and in a sense the final proof for me of the friendliness, the courtesy, the interest that the American will find to-day in France. I had gone to Paris, my ears filled with the warnings of those who told me that it was hard to be an American in Europe, in France, in the present hour. I had gone expecting, or at least fearing, that I should find it so.

Instead, from peasant to President I found only kindness, only gratitude, only a profound appreciation for all that Americans had individually done for France in the hour of her great trial. These things and one thing more I found: a very intense desire that Americans should be able to see for themselves; the Frenchman will not talk to you of what France has done, is doing; he shrinks from anything that might suggest imitation of the German method of propaganda. In so far as it is humanly possible he would have you see the thing for yourself and testify out of your own mouth.

Thus it came about that all my difficulties vanished when I had been permitted to express to the President my desire to see Verdun and to go back to America—I was sailing within the week—able to report what I had seen with

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my own eyes of the decisive battle still going forward around the Lorraine city. Without further delay or discussion, it was promised that I should go to Verdun by motor, that I should go cared for by the French military authorities, and that I should be permitted to see all that one could see at the moment of the contest.

We left Paris in the early afternoon; my companions were M. Henri Ponsot, chief of the Press Service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and M. Hugues le Roux, a distinguished Frenchman of letters well known to many Americans. To start for the battlefield from a busy, peaceful city, to run for miles through suburbs as quiet and lacking in martial aspect as the regions beyond the Harlem, at home, was a thing that seemed almost unreal; but only for a brief moment, for war has come very near to Paris, and one may not travel far in Eastern France without seeing its signs.

In less than an hour we were passing the rear of the line held by the British at the Battle of the Marne, and barely sixty minutes after we had passed out through the Vincennes gate we met at Courtacon the first of the ruined villages that for two hundred miles line the roadways that lead from the capital to Lorraine and Champagne. Suddenly in the midst of a peaceful countryside, after passing a score of undisturbed villages, villages so like one to another, you come to one upon which the storm has burst, and instead of snug houses, smiling faces, the air of contentment and happiness that was France, there is only a heap of ruins, houses with their roofs gone, their walls torn by shell fire, villages abandoned partially or wholly, contemporary Pompeiis, overtaken by the Vesuvius of Krupp.

Coincidentally there appear along the roadside, in the fields, among the plough furrows, on every side, the crosses that mark the graves of those who died for France—or for Germany. Along the slope you may mark the passage of a charge by these crosses; those who fell were buried as they lay, French and Germans with equal care. Indeed, there is a certain pride visible in all that the French do for their dead foes. Alongside a hamlet wantonly burned, burned by careful labour and with German thoroughness, in villages where you will be told of nameless atrocities and shameful killings, you will see the German graves, marked by neat crosses, surrounded by sod embankments, with plaques of black and white; the French graves are marked by plaques of red, white, and blue, and are invariably decorated with a flag and flowers.

Once you have seen these graves by the roadside going east you will hardly go a mile in two hundred which has not its graves. From the environs of Meaux, a scant twenty miles from Paris, to the frontier at the Seille, beyond Nancy, there are graves and more graves, now scattered, now crowded together where men fought hand to hand. Passing them in a swift-moving auto, they seem to march by you; there is the illusion of an army advancing on the hillside, until at last, beyond Nancy, where the fighting was so terrible, about

little villages such as Corbessaux, you come to the great common graves, where a hundred or two hundred men have been gathered, where the trenches now levelled are but long graves, and you read, "Here rest 179 French soldiers," or across the road, "Here 196 Germans."

Take a map of France and from a point just south of Paris draw a straight line to the Vosges; twenty or thirty miles to the north draw another. Between the two is the black district of the Marne and Nancy battles. It is the district of ruined villages, destroyed farms; it is the region where every hillside—so it will seem to the traveller—is marked by these pathetic crosses. It is a region in which the sense of death and destruction is abroad. Go forty miles north again and draw two more lines, and this is the region not of the death and destruction of yesterday, but of to-day; this is the front, where the graves are still in the making, the region of the Oise to the Meuse, from Noyon to Verdun.

On this day our route led eastward through the villages which in September, 1914, woke from at least a century of oblivion, from the forgetting that followed Napoleon's last campaign in France, to a splendid but terrible ten days: Courtacon, Sézanne, La-Fère Champenoise, Vitry-le-François, the region where Franchet d'Esperey and Foch fought, where the "Miracle of the Marne" was performed. Mile after mile the countryside files by, the never-changing impression of a huge cemetery, the hugest in the world, the stricken villages, now and then striving to begin again, a red roof here and there telling of the first counter-offensive of peace, of construction made against the whirlwind that had come and gone.

Always, too, nothing but old men and women, these and children, working in the broad fields, still partially cultivated, but no longer the fields of that perfectly cared for France of the other peace days. Women and children at the plough, old men bent double by age still spending such strength as is left in the tasks that war has set for them. This is the France behind the front, and, aside from the ruined villages and graves, the France that stretches from the Pyrenees to the Marne, a France from which youth and manhood are gone, in which age and childhood remain with the women. Yet in this land we were passing how much of the youth and manhood of France and Germany was buried the crosses indicated at every kilometre.

But a hundred miles east of Paris there begins a new world. The graves, the shell-cursed villages, remain, but this is no longer the France of the Marne fighting and of the war of two years ago. At Vitry-le-François you pass almost without warning into the region which is the back of the front to-day, the base of all the line of fire from Rheims to the Meuse, and suddenly along the road appear the canvas guideposts which bear the terse warning, "Verdun." You pass suddenly from ancient to contemporary history, from the killing of other years to the killing that is of to-day—the killing and the wounding—and along

the hills where there are still graves there begin to appear Red Cross tents and signs, and ambulances pass you bearing the latest harvest.

And now every village is a garrison town. For a hundred miles there have been only women and old men, but now there are only soldiers; they fill the streets; they crowd the doorways of the houses. The fields are filled with tents, with horses, with all the impedimenta of an army. The whole countryside is a place of arms. Every branch of French service is about you—Tunisians, Turcos, cavalry, the black, the brown, and the white—the men who yesterday or last week were in the first line, who rest and will return tomorrow or next day to fight again.

Unmistakably, too, you feel that this is the business of war; you are in a factory, a machine shop; if the product is death and destruction, it is no less a matter of machinery, not of romance, of glamour. The back of the front is a place of work and of rest for more work, but of parade, of the brilliant, of the fascinating there is just nothing. Men with bright but plainly weary faces, not young men, but men of thirty and above, hard bitten by their experience, patently fit, fed, but somehow related to the ruins and the destruction around them, they are all about you, and wherever now you see a grave you will discover a knot of men standing about it talking soberly. Wherever you see the vestiges of an old trench, a hill that was fought for at this time twenty months ago, you will see new practice trenches and probably the recruits, the "Class of 1917," the boys that are waiting for the call, listening to an officer explaining to them what has been done here, the mistake or the good judgment revealed by the event. For France is training the youth that remains to her on the still recent battlefields and in the presence of those who died to keep the ground.

Just as the darkness came we passed St. Dizier and entered at last upon the road to Verdun, the one road that is the life line of the city. For to understand the real problem of the defence of Verdun you must realize that there is lacking to the city any railroad. In September, 1914, the Germans took St. Mihiel and cut the railway coming north along the Meuse. On their retreat from the Marne the soldiers of the Crown Prince halted at Montfaucon and Varennes, and their cannon have commanded the Paris-Verdun-Metz Railroad ever since. Save for a crazy narrow-gauge line wandering along the hill slopes, climbing by impossible grades, Verdun is without rail communication.

It was this that made the defence of the town next to impossible. Partially to remedy the defect the French had reconstructed a local highway running from St. Dizier by Bar-le-Duc to Verdun beyond the reach of German artillery. To-day an army of a quarter of a million of men, the enormous parks of heavy artillery and field guns—everything is supplied by this one road and by motor transport.

Coming north from St. Dizier we entered this vast procession. Mile after mile the caravan stretched on, fifty miles with hardly a break of a hundred feet between trucks. Paris 'buses, turned into vehicles to bear fresh meat; new motor trucks built to carry thirty-five men and travelling in companies, regiments, brigades; wagons from the hood of which soldiers, bound to replace the killed and wounded of yesterday, looked down upon you calmly but unsmilingly. From St. Dizier to Verdun the impression was that of the machinery by which logs are carried to the saw in a mill. You felt unconsciously, yet unmistakably, that you were looking, not upon automobiles, not upon separate trucks, but upon some vast and intricate system of belts and benches that were steadily, swiftly, surely carrying all this vast material, carrying men and munitions and supplies, everything human and inanimate, to that vast grinding mill which was beyond the hills, the crushing machine which worked with equal remorselessness upon men and upon things.

Now and again, too, over the hills came the Red Cross ambulances; they passed you returning from the front and bringing within their carefully closed walls the finished product, the fruits of the day's grinding, or a fraction thereof. And about the whole thing there was a sense of the mechanical rather than the human, something that suggested an automatic, a machine-driven, movement; it was as if an unseen system of belts and engines and levers guided, moved, propelled this long procession upward and ever toward the mysterious front where the knives or the axes or the grinding stones did their work.

Night came down upon us along the road and brought a new impression. Mile on mile over the hills and round the curves, disappearing in the woods, reappearing on the distant summits of the hills, each showing a rear light that wagged crazily on the horizon, this huge caravan flowed onward, while in the villages and on the hillsides campfires flashed up and the faces or the figures of the soldiers could be seen now clearly and now dimly. But all else was subordinated to the line of moving transports. Somewhere far off at one end of the procession there was battle; somewhere down below at the other end there was peace. There all the resources, the life blood, the treasure in men and in riches of France were concentrating and collecting, were being fed into this motor fleet, which like baskets on ropes was carrying it forward to the end of the line and then bringing back what remained, or for the most part coming back empty, for more—for more lives and more treasure.

It was fullnight when our car came down the curved grades into Bar-le-Duc, halted at the corner, where soldiers performed the work of traffic policemen and steadily guided the caravan toward the road marked by a canvas sign lighted within by a single candle and bearing the one word, "Verdun." All night, too, the rumble of the passing transport filled the air and the little hotel shook with the jar of the heavy trucks, for neither by day nor by night

is there a halt in the motor transport, and the sound of this grinding is never low.

It was little more than daylight when we took the road again, with a thirty-mile drive to Verdun before us. Almost immediately we turned into the Verdun route we met again the caravan of automobiles, of camions, as the French say. It still flowed on without break. Now, too, we entered the main road, the one road to Verdun, the road that had been built by the French army against just such an attack as was now in progress. The road was as wide as Fifth Avenue, as smooth as asphalt—a road that, when peace comes, if it ever does, will delight the motorist. Despite the traffic it had to bear, it was in perfect repair, and soldiers in uniform sat by the side breaking stone and preparing metal to keep it so.

The character of the country had now changed. We were entering the region of the hills between the Aisne and the Meuse, a country reminiscent of New England. Those hills are the barriers which beyond the Meuse, under the name of the Côte de Meuse, have been the scene of so much desperate fighting. The roads that sidled off to the east bore battle names, St. Mihiel, Troyon, and the road that we followed was still marked at every turn with the magic word "Verdun." Our immediate objective was Souilly, the obscure hill town twenty miles, perhaps, south of the front, from which Sarrail had defended Verdun in the Marne days and from which Pétain was now defending Verdun against a still more terrible attack.

And in France to-day one speaks only of Verdun and Pétain. Soldiers have their day; Joffre, Castelnau, Foch, all retain much of the affection and admiration they have deserved, but at the moment it is the man who has held Verdun that France thinks of, and there was the promise for us that at Souilly we should see the man whose fame had filled the world in the recent great and terrible weeks. Upward and downward over the hills, through more ruined villages, more hospitals, more camps, our march took us until after a short hour we came to Souilly, general headquarters of the Army of Verdun, of Pétain, the centre of the world for the moment

Few towns have done less to prepare for greatness than Souilly. It boasts a single street three inches deep in the clay mud of the spring—a single street through which the Verdun route marches almost contemptuously, the same nest of stone and plaster houses, one story high, houses from which the owners had departed to make room for generals and staff officers. This and one thing more, the Mairie, the town hall, as usual the one pretentious edifice of the French hamlet, and before the stairway of this we stopped and got out.

We were at headquarters. From this little building, devoted for perhaps a century to the business of governing the commune of Souilly, with its scant thousand of people, Pétain was defending Verdun and the fate of an army of 250,000 men at the least. In the upstairs room, where the town councillors

had once debated parochial questions, Joffre and Castelnau and Pétain in the terrible days of the opening conflict had consulted, argued, decided—decided the fate of France, so the Germans had said, for they had made the fall of Verdun the assurance of French collapse.

Unconsciously, too, you felt the change in the character of the population of this village. There were still the soldiers, the eternal gray-blue uniforms, but there were also men of a different type, men of authority. In the street your guides pointed out to you General Herr, the man who had designed and planned and accomplished the miracle of the motor transport that had saved Verdun—with the aid of the brave men fighting somewhere not far beyond the nearest hills. He had commanded at Verdun when the attack came, and without hesitation he had turned over his command to Pétain, his junior in service and rank before the war, given up the glory and become the superintendent of transport. Men spoke to you of the fine loyalty of that action with unconcealed admiration.

And then out of the remoteness of Souilly there came a voice familiar to an American. Bunau-Varilla, the man of Panama, wearing the uniform of a commandant and the Croix de Guerre newly bestowed for some wonderful engineering achievement, stepped forward to ask for his friends and yours of the old "*Sun* paper." I had seen him last in the *Sun* office in the days when the war had just broken out and he was about to sail for home; in the days when the Marne was still unfought and he had breathed hope then as he spoke with confidence now.

Presently there arrive the two officers whose duty it was to take me to Verdun, Captain Henri Bordeaux, a man of letters known to all Frenchmen; Captain Madelin, an historian, already documented in the history of the war making under his own eyes. To these gentlemen and their colleagues who perform this task that can hardly be agreeable, who risk their lives and give over their time with unfailing courtesy and consideration that the American newspaper correspondent may see, may report, it is impossible to return sufficient thanks, and every American newspaper reader who finds on his breakfast table the journal that tells him of the progress of the war owes something to some officer.

"Were we to see Verdun?" This was the first problem. I had been warned two days before that the bombardment was raging and that it was quite possible that it would be unsafe to go farther. But the news was reassuring; Verdun was tranquil. "And Pétain?" One could not yet say.

Even as we spoke there was a stirring in the crowd, general saluting, and I caught a glimpse of the commander-in-chief as he went quickly up the staircase. For the rest we must wait. But not for very long; in a few minutes there came the welcome word that General Pétain would see us, would see the stray American correspondent.

Since I saw Pétain in the little Mairie at Souilly I have seen many photographs of him, but none in any real measure give the true picture of the defender of Verdun. He saw us in his office, the bare upstairs room, two years ago the office of the Mayor of Souilly. Think of the Selectmen's office in any New England village and the picture will be accurate: a bare room, a desk, one chair, a telephone, nothing on the walls but two maps, one of the military zone, one of the actual front and positions of the Verdun fighting. A bleak room, barely heated by the most primitive of stoves. From the single window one looked down on the cheerless street along which lumbered the caravan of autos. On the pegs against the wall hung the General's hat and coat, weather-stained, faded, the clothes of a man who worked in all weathers. Of staff officers, of uniforms, of colour there was just nothing; of war there was hardly a hint.

At the door the commander-in-chief met us, shook hands, and murmured clearly and slowly, with incisive distinctness, the formal words of French greeting; he spoke no English. Instantly there was the suggestion of Kitchener, not of Kitchener as you see him in flesh, but in photographs, the same coldness, decision. The smile that accompanied the words of welcome vanished and the face was utterly motionless, expressionless. You saw a tall, broad-shouldered man, with every appearance of physical strength, a clear blue eye, looking straight forward and beyond.

My French companion, M. Le Roux, spoke with Pétain. He had just come from Joffre and he told an interesting circumstance. Pétain listened. He said now and then "yes" or "no." Nothing more. Watching him narrowly you saw that occasionally his eyes twitched a little, the single sign of fatigue that the long strain of weeks of responsibility had brought.

It was hard to believe, looking at this quiet, calm, silent man, that you were in the presence of the soldier who had won the Battle of Champagne, the man whom the war had surprised in the last of his fifties, a Colonel, a teacher of war rather than a soldier, a professor like Foch.

No one of Napoleon's marshals had commanded as many men as obeyed this Frenchman, who was as lacking in the distinction of military circumstance as our own Grant. Napoleon had won all his famous victories with far fewer troops than were directed from the telephone on the table yonder.

Every impression of modern war that comes to one actually in touch with it is a destruction of illusion: this thing is a thing of mechanism rather than of brilliance; perhaps Pétain has led a regiment, a brigade, or a division to the charge. You knew instinctively in seeing the man that you would go or come, as he said, but there was neither dash nor fire, nothing of the suggestion of élan; rather there was the suggestion of the commander of a great ocean liner, the man responsible for the lives, this time of hundreds of thousands, not scores, for the safety of France, not of a ship, but the man of ma-

chinery and the master of the wisdom of the tides and the weather, not the Ney, or the Murat, not the Napoleon of Arcola. The impression was of a strong man whose life was a life beaten upon by storms; the man on the bridge, to keep to the rather ridiculously inadequate figure, but not by any chance the man on horseback.

My talk, our talk with Pétain, was the matter of perhaps five minutes. The time was consumed by the words of M. Le Roux, who spoke very earnestly, urging that more American correspondents be permitted to visit Verdun, and Pétain heard him patiently, but said just nothing. Once he had greeted us his face settled into that grim expression that never changed until he smiled his word of good wishes as we left. Yet I have since found that apart from one circumstance which I shall mention in a moment I have remembered those minutes most clearly of all of my Verdun experience. Just as the photograph does not reveal the face of the man, the word does not describe the sense of strength, of responsibility, that he gives.

In a childish sort of way, exactly as one thinks of war as a matter of dash and colour and motion, one thinks of the French general as the leader of a cavalry charge or of a forlorn hope of infantry. And the French soldier of this war has not been the man of charge or of dash—not that he has not charged as well as ever in his history, a little more bravely, perhaps, for machine guns are new and something worse than other wars have had. What the French soldier has done has been to stand, to hold, to die not in the onrush but on the spot.

And Pétain in some curious way has fixed in my mind the impression of the new Frenchman, if there be a new one, or perhaps better of the French soldier of to-day, whether he wear the stars of the general or undecorated "horizon" blue of the *poilu*. The look that I saw in his eyes, the calm, steady, utterly emotionless looking straight forward, I saw everywhere at the front and at the back of the front. It embodied for me an enduring impression of the spirit and the poise of the French soldier of the latest and most terrible of French struggles. And I confess that, more than all I saw and heard at the front and in Paris, the look of this man convinced me that Verdun would not fall, that France herself would not either weary or weaken.

In Paris, where one may hear anything, there are those that will tell you that Joffre's work is done and that France waits for the man who will complete the task; that the strain of the terrible months has wearied the general who won the Battle of the Marne and saved France. They will tell you, perhaps, that Pétain is the man; they will certainly tell you that they hope that the man has been found in Pétain. As to the truth of all this I do not pretend to know. I did not see Joffre, but all that I have read of Joffre suggests that Pétain is of his sort, the same quiet, silent man, with a certain [illegible] North, a grimness of manner that is lacking in his chief.

There was a Kitchener legend in Europe, and I do not think it survives save a little perhaps in corners of England. There was a legend of a man of ice and of iron, a man who made victory out of human material as a man makes a wall of mortar and stone, a man to whom his material was only mortar and stone, even though it were human. This legend has perished so far as Kitchener is concerned, gone with so much that England trusted and believed two years ago, but I find myself thinking now of Pétain as we all thought of Kitchener in his great day.

If I were an officer I should not like to come to the defender of Verdun with the confession of failure. I think I should rather meet the Bavarians in the first-line trenches, but I should like to know that when I was obeying orders I was carrying out a minor detail of something Pétain had planned; I should expect it to happen, the thing that he had arranged, and I should feel that those clear, steel-blue eyes had foreseen all that could occur, foreseen calmly and utterly, whether it entailed the death of one or a thousand men, of ten thousand men if necessary, and had willed that it should happen. I do not believe Napoleon's Old Guard would have followed Pétain as they followed Ney. I cannot fancy him in the Imperial uniform, and yet, now that war is a thing of machines, of telephones, of indirect fire and destruction from unseen weapons at remote ranges, now that the whole manner and circumstance of conflict have changed, it is but natural that the General should change, too. Patently Pétain is of the new, not the old, but no less patently he was the master of it.

We left the little Mairie, entered our machines, and slid out swiftly for the last miles, climbed and curved over the final hill and suddenly looked down on a deep, trenchlike valley marching from east to west and carrying the Paris-Verdun-Metz Railroad, no longer available for traffic. And as we coasted down the hill we heard the guns at last, not steadily, but only from time to time, a distant boom, a faint billowing up of musketry fire. Some three or four miles straight ahead there were the lines of fire beyond the brown hills that flanked the valley.

At the bottom of the valley we turned east, moved on for a mile, and stopped abruptly. The guns were sounding more clearly, and suddenly there was a sense not of soldiers, but of an army. On one side of the road a column was coming toward us, a column of men who were leaving the trenches for a rest, the men who for the recent days had held the first line. Wearily but steadily they streamed by; the mud of the trenches covered their tunics; here and there a man had lost his steel helmet and wore a handkerchief about his head, probably to conceal a slight wound that but for the helmet had killed him.

These men were smiling as they marched; they carried their full equip-
ttled and tinkled; they carried their guns at all angles, they wore
the strangest of disorders; they seemed almost like miners

coming from the depths of the earth rather than soldiers returning from a decisive battle, from the hell of modern shell fire.

But it was the line on the other side of the road that held the eye. Here were the troops that were going toward the fire, toward the trenches, that were marching to the sound of the guns, and as one saw them the artillery rumble took on a new distinctness.

Involuntarily I searched the faces of these men as they passed. They were hardly ten feet from me. Platoon after platoon, company after company, whole regiments in columns of fours. And seeing the faces brought an instant shock; they all wore the same calm, steady, slightly weary expression, but there was in the whole line scarcely a young man. Here were men of the thirties, not the twenties; men still in the prime of strength, of health, but the fathers of families, the men of full manhood.

Almost in a flash the fact came home. This was what all the graves along the road had meant. This was what the battlefields and the glories of the twenty months had spelled—France had sent her youth and it was spent; she was sending her manhood now.

In the line no man smiled and no man straggled; the ranks were closed up and there were neither commands nor any visible sign of authority. These men who were marching to the sound of the guns had been there before. They knew precisely what it meant. Yet you could not but feel that as they went a little wearily, sadly, they marched willingly. They would not have it otherwise. Their faces were the faces of men who had taken the full measure of their own fate.

You had a sense of the loathing, the horror, above all the sadness that was in their hearts that this thing, this war, this destruction had to be. They had come back here through all the waste of ruined villages and shell-torn hillsides; all the men that you saw would not measure the cost of a single hour of trench fighting if the real attack began. This these men knew, and the message of the artillery fire, which was only one of unknown terrors for you, was intelligible to the utmost to each of them.

And yet with the weariness there was a certain resignation, a certain patience, a certain sense of comprehending sacrifice that more than all else is France to-day, the true France. This, and not the empty forts, not even the busy guns, was the wall that defended France, this line of men. If it broke there would come thundering down again out of the north all the tornado of destruction that had turned northeastern France into a waste place and wrecked so much of the world's store of the beautiful and the inspiring.

Somehow you felt that this was in the minds of all these men. They had willed to die that France might live. They were going to a death that sounded ever more clearly as they marched. This death had eaten up all that was young, most of what was young at the least, of France; it might yet consume

France, and so these men marched to the sound of the guns, not to martial music, not with any suggestion of dash, of enthusiasm, but quietly, steadily, all with the same look upon their faces—the look of men who had seen death and are to see it again. Instinctively I thought of what Kipling had said to me in London:

"Somewhere over there," he had said, "the thing will suddenly grip your throat and your heart; it will take hold of you as nothing in your life has ever done or ever will." And I know that I never shall forget those lines of quiet, patient, middle-aged men marching to the sound of the guns, leaving at their backs the countless graves that hold the youth of France, the men who had known the Marne, the Yser, Champagne, who had known death for nearly two years, night and day, almost constantly. Yet during the fifteen minutes I watched there was not one order, not one straggler; there was a sense of the regularity with which the blood flows through the human arteries in this tide, and it was the blood of France.

So many people have asked me, I had asked myself, the question before I went to France: "Are they not weary of it? Will the French not give up from sheer exhaustion of strength?" I do not think so, now that I have seen the faces of these hundreds of men as they marched to the trenches beyond Verdun. France may bleed to death, but I do not think that while there are men there will be an end of the sacrifice. No pen or voice can express the horror that these men, that all Frenchmen, have of this war, of all war, the weariness. They hate it; you cannot mistake this; but France marches to the frontier in the spirit that men manned the walls against the barbarians in the other days; there is no other way; it must be.

Over and over again there has come the invariable answer; it would have come from scores and hundreds of these men who passed so near me I could have touched their faded uniforms if I had asked—"It is for France, for civilization; it must be, for there is no other way; we shall die, but with us, with our sacrifice, perhaps this thing will end." You cannot put it in words quite, I do not think even any Frenchman has quite said it, but you can see it, you can feel it, you can understand it, when you see a regiment, a brigade, a division of these men of thirty, some perhaps of forty, going forward to the war they hate and will never quit until that which they love is safe or they and all of their race are swallowed up in the storm that now was audibly beating beyond the human walls on the near-by hillsides.

Presently we moved again, we slipped through the column, topped the last incline, shot under the crumbling gate of the Verdun fortress, and as we entered a shell burst just behind us and the roar drowned out all else in its sudden and paralyzing crash. It had fallen, so we learned a little later, just where we had been watching the passing troops; it had fallen among them and killed. But an hour or two later, when we repassed the point where it fell, men were still

marching by. Other regiments of men were still marching to the sound of the guns, and those who had passed were already over the hills and beyond the river, filing into the trenches in time, so it turned out, to meet the new attack that came with the later afternoon.

I went to Verdun to see the forts, the city, the hills, and the topography of a great battle; I went in the hope of describing with a little of clarity what the operation meant as a military affair. I saw, and I shall hereafter try to describe this. But I shall never be able to describe this thing which was the true Verdun for me—these men, their faces, seen as one heard the shell fire and the musketry rolling, not steadily but intermittently, the men who had marched over the roads that are lined with graves, through villages that are destroyed, who had come of their own will and in calm determination and marched unhurryingly and yet unshrinkingly, the men who were no longer young, who had left behind them all that men hold dear in life, home, wives, children, because they knew that there was no other way.

I can only say to all those who have asked me, "What of France?" this simple thing, that I do not believe the French will ever stop. I do not believe, as the Germans have said, that French courage is weakening, that French determination is abating. I do not believe the Kaiser himself would think this if he had seen these men's faces as they marched *toward* his guns. I think he would feel as I felt, as one must feel, that these men went willingly, hating war with their whole soul, destitute of passion or anger. I never heard a passionate word in France, because there had entered into their minds, into the mind and heart of a whole race, the belief that what was at stake was the thing that for two thousand years of history had been France.

II

PÉTAIN

By STEPHANE LAUZANNE

In the year 1902—twelve years before the present war—there arrived one day at the War School—that nursery of the General Staff of the French army—a new professor who had just been appointed. He was a tall, thin, slender officer, with a piercing eye, and had merely the rank of major: Henri Philippe Pétain.

Curiously enough, his new position gave him for colleagues at the school a colonel named Foch, who taught general tactics, and a major named Fayolle, who had charge of the course on artillery.

Major Pétain's department was the course on infantry. But, and this is a significant detail, this infantryman whose mission was to teach foot soldiers, always dwelt with special emphasis on cannon, machine guns, and shells. At that time the War School was divided into two camps: one in favour of "*movement*," the other in favour of "*fire*." Major Pétain, although a foot soldier, belonged to the "fire" camp. In his opinion, one thing above all others governed the entire science of warfare: firing on the battlefield. To his way of thinking there could be no possibility of victory without artillery, and battles were won less through strategy, or the tactics of onslaught, than by the mass of artillery at one's disposal making gaps in enemy lines. Major Pétain never failed to insist daily on this point in his lecture room; he insisted to such good purpose that he trained pupils, obtained followers, created in a way a school of his own; and his course became—and remained—famous.

Years passed, and then came the war. By this time Pétain was only a colonel—for he had gained but small promotion in those twelve years—and he was at the head of an infantry brigade at the Battle of Charleroi. He made wonderful use of this brigade, by the way, for he succeeded, in the position he occupied at the extreme right of the Fifth Army, in preventing the enemy forces, which greatly outnumbered his own, from crossing the River Meuse at Dinant. He was immediately made a general, and an entire division was entrusted to him—the Sixth Infantry Division. He had still only five stripes to his cap and sleeves: there had been no time for affixing stars. The infantry division given him had been fearfully smashed at Charleroi and Guise. He straightened it out again, moulded it once more into a homogeneous whole, and at the Battle of the Marne led it to the assault of the famous crest of St. Bon, at the very centre of the battle line.

On that day, the former instructor of infantry at the War School had a splendid opportunity for the application of his theories. The crests he was ordered to take constituted a formidable group, remarkably well defended, and difficult for infantry columns to take by storm. General Pétain—he had been a general but a few days—made his artillery do all the preliminary work with great thoroughness. His cannon caused tremendous havoc, raining fire on the hills he had to take. He then hurled his infantry to the assault. And as the latter hesitated somewhat in front of the barrage of large-calibre shells with which the enemy was covering the hills of St. Bon, which had to be crossed, General Pétain went forward, on foot, his stick in his hand, through the fields, a little in advance of his troops. With his firm, even walk he continued until he reached the outskirts of the village of St. Bon, where he kept his post the entire day under violent bombardment.

After the victory of the Marne, Brigadier-General Pétain was promoted to the generalship of a division, and from then on his name is known as that of one of the most brilliant generals of the entire French army. During the offensive of May, 1915, he commanded an entire army corps, and on the 9th of May that same army corps, in one day, in one dash, carried off every one of the German organizations at Carency, Albain, and St. Nazaire, capturing ten thousand prisoners and taking thirty cannon.

In September he participated in the Champagne offensive; this time he was in command of an entire army; he, in fact, prepared the offensive, and his preparation was a masterly piece of work. On the first day, when he learned that the waves of his infantrymen had gained four kilometres in depth—which at that time was considered enormous—and, contrary to the opinion of the entire staff, he said:

"All right, but nothing has been accomplished and everything will have to be done over again."

But the finest page in General Pétain's glorious career, the page which will leave his name a famous one in the history of this war, is certainly that of the defence of Verdun.

On February 25, 1916, on a freezing, snowy day, General Pétain was summoned to a small village lying to the southeast of Verdun, where General de Castlenau had established his headquarters. General Pétain went up the steps of the town hall, entered the small room, the walls of which were lined with maps and plans, and this is how he was greeted by General de Castelnau:

"Oh, here you are, Pétain. You are going to take command."

"But I know nothing of the situation——"

"You will get to know it: you are to take command of the entire Verdun army at midnight."

The situation was perfectly clear: the Woëvre had just been evacuated;

Fort Douaumont was lost; Fort Vaux was about to fall; Verdun was directly threatened.

General Pétain at once set to work getting settled, himself telephoning to the various heads of army corps to inform them that he was in charge. The first chief to answer his call was General Balfourier, commanding the famous Twentieth Corps.

"You are taking command?" said General Balfourier, "then everything is as it should be—all will be well."

And as a matter of fact, as after events proved, everything *was* well, but at the cost of what gigantic efforts, tremendous tenacity, and Herculean labour!

Pétain's first effort was to strengthen the defensive barrier which was somewhat precarious. It resisted and withstood every assault. It held against attacks directed by the enemy; now toward the right bank of the river, during the earlier part of March; now toward the left bank, during the latter part of March; and finally toward the two banks at the same time, during the early days of April. On the evening of April 10th he was able to reassure his troops by an order of the day which will always remain famous:

("*On les aura*") "We shall get them."

At the same time he was building railroad lines, roads, canals, drinking troughs, stations, cantonments, shelters, galleries, trenches. Pétain, who is considered the greatest fighting general France has had in this war, is perhaps also her greatest builder. He is not satisfied with fighting: he builds. He surrounded Verdun with such a network of defences that it was soon possible to use this same network, which was practically impregnable, for purposes of attack.

On May 1, 1916, Pétain left Verdun, which then passed to General Nivelle, but Verdun nevertheless remained under the care of Pétain, he being appointed commander of the entire group of armies of the centre, that is, all of the armies from the River Oise to Lorraine, and from afar, he was still protecting Verdun and preparing her revenge.

Everyone knows how this was done—and there are few similar instances in history. In two attacks, in two dashes—one on October 24th, the other on December 15, 1916—the Verdun army regained, each time within twenty-four hours, the greater part of the positions which it had taken the shock troops of the Crown Prince twenty-four weeks to conquer, inch by inch.

Finally, on April, 30, 1917, General Henri Philippe Pétain reached the highest position it is possible for a French general to attain: by Government decree he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of all the French armies in France. From then on Pétain's history was the history of those armies: that is, the consolidation of the entire front, and above all, the splendid victory of Malmaison, in the fall of 1917, won almost without any sacrifice or loss. But there is an-

other history far more difficult to write, and perhaps the most glorious of all: the history of the moral consolidation of the French army. And that was General Pétain's own particular work, for which he may rest assured of the eternal gratitude of the French nation.

When on the 30th of April, 1917, General Pétain assumed the chief command of the French army, that army's magnificent morale—for reasons which since have become perfectly apparent—was slightly wavering. Vast hopes—somewhat exaggerated perhaps—which had been held out to all as the consequence of the April offensive, resulted in disappointment, and disappointment was succeeded by bitterness. Perhaps, too, the material comfort of the soldiers was not all that it should have been. There was one thing regarding which every *poilu* was particularly sensitive, i. e., the question of furloughs which for three years had never been completely and definitely settled. In such and such a corps, leave of absence would be granted frequently; in another, at long intervals only. The matter was left to the judgment of the chief. Moreover, the way soldiers would go on their leave left a good deal to be desired: the trips were long and tiring; the men were often transported in freight cars; they were made to wait for long stops at stations, and meanwhile they could see quick, comfortable trains, carrying only civilians, pass them by. Hence dissatisfaction, recriminations, and complaints.

General Pétain changed all this as if by magic. The question of leave was finally settled and determined without possibility of discussion. Every soldier, thenceforth, was entitled, three times a year, to a ten-day furlough, making in all an entire month, exclusive of the time spent on the trip both ways. The men were to have this furlough unconditionally, in the same way that they are entitled to their pay. Should circumstances intervene making it impossible for them to have their ten days at regular intervals, they were to have them at near intervals, or they could be left to accumulate and be taken all at one time; but in any case the men would spend thirty days of each year in their own homes, among their own people. Quick through trains were organized and specially reserved for the men on leave. Better still, a special railway guide—the "Guide for Soldiers on Leave"—was printed in hundreds of thousands of copies. By its help a soldier might prepare and organize his trip beforehand.

Thanks to this excellent organization of leave of absence, to a much better and more regular diet, and to improved cantonments, the material comfort of the French soldier reached a higher degree than ever before, and moral well-being followed material comfort.

This result was the admirable achievement of General Pétain exclusively.

A remarkable tactician, a great builder, he is also a leader of men. Under exceptionally difficult conditions he led his soldiers through the hardest battles ever recorded in history, and finally on to victory.

III

GREAT BRITAIN'S ATTITUDE IN THE WAR

By the RIGHT HON. VISCOUNT BRYCE, O. M.

The present war differs from all that have gone before it not only in its vast scale and in the volume of misery it has brought upon the world, but also in the fact that it is a war of Principles, and a war in which the permanent interests, not merely of the belligerent Powers but of all nations, are involved as such interests were never involved before.

This is a fact which many persons in neutral countries have not yet understood. They seem to think that, as has usually happened in previous wars, there is no great distinction between the combatants. They perceive that charges and counter charges are bandied to and fro, and they have not the patience to enquire which are true and which false. Being perhaps too lazy or indifferent to examine the motives and the conduct of the parties, they lapse into the easy assumption that both are equally to blame, and that if they themselves have any duty at all as citizens of a neutral country, that duty is only to do their best to bring back peace at the earliest possible moment, with no thought for a more distant future. Some neutral writers have put this view crudely by saying it is only a quarrel of two dogs over a bone, whom the bystander would like to separate. Each nation is, they assume, fighting for its own selfish interests, just as the monarchs of Europe used to fight in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to acquire territory or trade.

But this is not such a war. I do not deny that such a war of the older type might still occur. Nations might quarrel over their respective territorial claims and become angry enough to fight the matter out instead of going to arbitration. Such a war need not have raised any moral issue. For each of the contending claims there might have been good arguments, and it might well have been thought that faults on both sides had led to the outbreak of hostilities. Even if the balance of merits inclined one way or the other, dispassionate and well-informed observers in neutral countries might have been divided in opinion as to those merits, and have hesitated to express their sympathies as was the case with the war between Prussia and Austria in 1866, and between Russia and Japan in 1901. But let me repeat it, this is not a case in which neutrals can look on with an indifferent or merely curious eye. This is a war of Principles, moral and political, in which every man in neutral countries who has a sense of his personal duties to humanity ought

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to try to find the truth and to form an honest and impartial judgment on the merits, so that the sentiment of his country would cast its weight on the side of truth and humanity.

Into the circumstances attending the outbreak of the war I will not here enter. That would lead me into too wide a field. Those circumstances may be studied in the documents published by the belligerent powers, and they are dealt with in previous volumes of this history. No fuller and fairer examinations of them have been published than are contained in two books written by American jurists, the book of Mr. Ellery Stowell, entitled "The Diplomacy of the War of 1914," and the book of Mr. James M. Beck called "The Evidence in the Case," books to which, rather than to any English book, I desire to refer because their authors, being neutrals, wrote with a complete freedom from national bias. I shall here examine not the Origins of the war but the Conduct of the war, the facts regarding which are really not in controversy, and shall try to indicate the light that conduct casts upon the character of the parties and the nature of the issues raised, as these now affect the world at large. But one preliminary word must be said as to the position and motives of Great Britain.

Britain did not expect this war and did not wish for it. All her interests were against a war. She had nothing to gain and much to lose. She was quite unprepared for war. Her army was small, and she had made no plans for increasing it such as she has been obliged, suddenly and at an enormous cost, to improvise since the war began. She had only a small stock of artillery, the thing most necessary in modern warfare. The German Government has invented and tried to propagate three statements regarding Britain's action, all equally baseless. One is that she was filled with jealousy and envy of Germany's commercial prosperity and therefore anxious to ruin German trade and arrest German development. There is not a word of truth in this. The English were not so ignorant and destitute of business sense as not to see that the crippling of Germany by war must cost them in a few months ten times as much as they could have gained in twenty years by arresting the growth of German trade competition. Germany, moreover, was their best foreign customer. They bought more from her than from any foreign European nation: and they sold more to her.

Some Englishmen had become uneasy at the continued increase of the German fleet, because there was no nation except Britain against which that increase could seem to be directed. But there was no hatred of Germany in the breasts of the British people: and few believed that any war would in our time disturb the relations of the countries.

The second allegation is that the late King Edward had brought about an alliance with France intended to hem in and menace Germany. This also is untrue. Edward VII was a genuine lover of peace and wished for friendship

with the French, whom he liked, and from whom Britain had been divided by various clashes of interest. He did something, not politically, but by his personal kindliness and courtesy, to bring about good-will between the two peoples. That was all. He had no hostile designs whatever against Germany, nor had his Ministers.

The third story is that Britain had arranged with Belgium to attack Germany through Belgian territory. This is a pure fabrication. All that was ever done was to consider with the Belgian Government what Britain should do, as a Power bound by treaty to protect the integrity of Belgium in case any third Power should invade Belgian territory. This it was Britain's plain duty to consider. She had saved Belgian territory from attack in 1870 by her intervention, and might have to do so again.

Now let me ask any fair-minded neutral to follow the chief incidents of the war from August 4, 1914, and pass his judgment upon the facts, facts which are open to no controversy.

The war began, so far as Britain was concerned, with August 4th, on which day the German armies entered Belgium, having lulled the Belgian Government by the assurances which their Minister at Brussels continued to give until two days before the ultimatum, demanding a passage through the country. As the German Chancellor shortly afterward confessed in the Reichstag that his Government had done a wrong and violated international law by carrying war into a country the neutrality and independence of which every one knows they had guaranteed, and which, had there been no guarantee at all, was entitled on the common principles of justice to be exempt from invasion, no more need be said as to the morality or legality of the German action. It was wholly unprovoked and wholly unjustified, for the stories that France had planned to attack Germany through Belgium and that French officers had already entered that country were evidently invented, and were subsequently dropped. The only effect of these stories and of that other tale that French aëroplanes had flown over German territory, a tale afterward also abandoned when it had served its momentary purpose, was to show that no reliance can be placed on statements proceeding from the German Government.

The invasion of Belgium, the most flagrant offence against international right Europe had seen for centuries, proved that the German Government could not be trusted to keep any engagement, however solemn. It does not appear to be realized in neutral countries how great is the difficulty which such a breach of faith places in the way of negotiations for armistice or peace. A government which violates its obligations toward those with whom it has been at peace, and defends this violation by the plea of its own military necessity, can even less be relied on to fulfil any promise made to its enemies.

The next event, or rather series of events, which showed how much this

war was going to differ from previous wars, was the conduct of the German invading armies in Belgium and Northern France. All along the line of their march innocent civilians, old men, women, and children, as well as other inhabitants, were slaughtered on the pretext that some persons in the towns and villages had shot at the invading force. The leading inhabitants—often priests—were constantly seized and called "hostages," who were to be put to death if any resistance was made by any civilian, though these persons were not responsible for such resistance and could not have prevented it. Such "hostages" were frequently shot. Hundreds of innocent persons were seized, packed in baggage or cattle cars and sent by railway to Germany, often without food or drink for many hours together. Villages and large parts of such a city as Louvain were destroyed by fire. Shocking outrages were committed upon women, and that by officers as well as soldiers, and little effort was made to restrain or punish such crimes, which were often committed under the influence of liquor. The accounts of these murders and other excesses which the refugees who escaped from Belgium reported found at first little credence in England, for it was hard to believe that the soldiers of a civilized nation could commit them. But when the Belgian, French, and British governments caused the evidence of eye witnesses among the refugees to be carefully taken and tested, it was proved beyond all question not only that such things had happened, but that they had happened by the orders of the German officers, who themselves were acting under orders from headquarters, and who sometimes expressed regret at having to execute such orders. If there are any persons in neutral countries who still think such things too horrible to be true, let them weigh these two facts. Diaries (written in German) found upon German prisoners, or on the bodies of dead German soldiers, contain records of the same (or quite similar) crimes as the evidence of the refugees established. The genuineness of these diaries, many of which have been published by the Belgian, French, and British investigators, is not disputed by the German Government. They alone are sufficient to prove how the troops behaved. The second fact is that the German Government has never attempted to disprove the evidence adduced against them. They did publish a sort of reply to the Belgian reports, but it consisted chiefly of allegations that Belgian civilians had given provocation by firing on German troops. This attempt at a justification was a tacit admission that the massacres had occurred, and that in them there had been killed, as a matter of course, many innocent persons no way concerned in such firing. In fact, the vast majority of those so executed including the so-called "hostages" had no responsibility at all for the occasional firing, such as it may have been. To the British Report, which contained a very large number of depositions by the witnesses, the German Government has never ventured, in the nineteen months that have elapsed since its publication, to make any official reply.

Next after the murders on land came those at sea. Submarines began to destroy, usually without any warning, unarmed merchant vessels, drowning their crews; and also unarmed passenger vessels, drowning their passengers. The *Lusitania*, in which twelve hundred people perished, many of these citizens of neutral countries, was only one of many cases. These practices, gross violations of the rule of international law which requires that the safety of those on board a merchant ship shall be provided for if she is sunk, have gone on till now. Even hospital ships, about whose character there could be no mistake, have been torpedoed.

A little later than the murders on land and sea came the murders from the air. In the many air raids over England no military damage has been done, and only a handful of soldiers, about fifty (so far as I know), have suffered. But many hundreds of innocent civilians, mostly women and children, have been maimed or killed; and the murders still go on. The German Government must by this time know that these raids have no effect upon the British people except to rouse their anger and so to make them more determined than ever to prosecute the war. Why, then, are the air raids continued? Apparently only to make the Germans at home believe that the enemy is being injured and so to sustain their spirits when the long-expected victories in France do not arrive.

In the spring of 1915 the so-called Young Turk Committee, which now rules Turkey in the name of the Sultan, began without any provocation from their Armenian subjects, a series of massacres and deportations in Armenia and Asia Minor in which from 600,000 to 800,000 of those Christian subjects have been put to death, the men by murder, the women and children mostly by being torn from their homes and driven away by Turkish troops through deserts where those who did not die by the war are now dying from hunger, exposure, and disease. Many more of the women have been seized by Turks, or sold in open market, to be enslaved in Turkish harems. The German Government knew perfectly well what was being done. How far they actively encouraged it, or allowed their officers on the spot to do so, we do not yet know. But it is certain that they acquiesced in it. They could have stopped it by lifting a finger had they wished to do so, for the Turks are entirely in their hands. Instead of arresting the slaughter, they have honoured the two chief criminals, Talaat and Enver, by many compliments and the last-named ruffian by a colonelcy in the German army.

I pass over other incidents, such as the treatment of war prisoners and the executions of Miss Cavell and Captain Fryatt, to come to the latest instances of the German Government's methods in warfare. Last spring they carried off hundreds of girls from their homes in Northern France to be forced to work in Germany. Within the last three months they have seized many thousands of Belgian working men, and on the pretext that there is no employment for

them in the towns where they live, have carried them off, amid the cries of their children and the shrieks of their wives who flung themselves on the rails in front of the locomotives, to German towns where they will be forced to work for their enemy masters against their own fellow countrymen. The motive, so the German Government announces, is a philanthropic one. It is not good for workmen to be unemployed. The unemployment, it need hardly be said, had been caused by the German Government itself, which had taken out of the country for its own use all the raw materials of industry and all the machinery. These workmen were not starving. When the Germans refused to feed, they were and had continued to be fed by the charity of Americans and Englishmen, directed by the energy of an American, Mr. Hoover. In one Belgian province, where some private factories were still going, the Germans authorities stopped these in order to invent a ground for treating the workmen as unemployed, and driving them off into Germany to labour there. This is slave raiding, worthy of those Arab marauders whom Livingstone tried to root out of Africa.

A similar violation of the best settled rules of international law is being now carried out in Poland. Here the Polish inhabitants of the invaded districts which the German armies occupy are being forced into the German army on the pretext that the country is already conquered and its people already German subjects. They will be roped in and driven to die in order to perpetuate the tyranny which the German Government has already been exercising over their brethren in part of old Poland which she has held by force these many years.

All the facts here briefly enumerated are indisputable and undisputed facts. Whatever be the excuses or palliations which the German Government may put forward, all these acts are flagrant violations not only of international law but of the long-settled practice of civilized nations. They are even worse. They violate the fundamental principles of natural justice and of common humanity. Even Bonaparte, whose offences shocked his contemporaries, did not in eighteen years of war commit so many breaches of the much laxer international rules of his time, nor so offend against helpless innocence, as the German generals have done since August 4, 1914. If some persons in neutral nations have found it hard to believe that these successive acts of cruelty and injustice really happened this is because the spirit and temper they reveal were so little to be expected from the armies of a civilized nation. The difficulty, however, disappears when one studies the manuals of military law and practice issued by the German General Staff, and learns to know what is the official German doctrine of war. According to that doctrine, the State is above all morality. Whatever is done in its interest is right. There is in international relations, be they of war or peace, really no such thing as Right but only Force. Force makes Right. Whatever war necessity pre-

scribes is proper to be done. Treaties may be broken, neutral countries attacked, innocent non-combatants killed. Many German theorists go so far as to say that it is Germany's mission, assigned to her by Providence or by Nature, to dominate all other nations, because she is the strongest and most civilized among them. It appears, therefore, that the crimes enumerated, all of which were done by the orders of the military authorities, are done not at random but in pursuance of a System, and will be repeated as long as that System and the military caste which approves it and carries it out in practice hold sway in Germany. As was observed long ago, the occupation of Prussians is war. Among them the Soldier is master. Professor Gilbert Murray has well said: "Germany has produced the specialized soldier, not the humane soldier, the Christian soldier, the chivalrous soldier, or the soldier with a sense of civil duties, but the soldier who is trained to be a soldier and nothing else, to disregard all the rest of human relations, to see all his country's neighbours merely as enemies to be duped and conquered, to see all life according to some system of perverted biology as a mere struggle of force and fraud. The Germans have created this type of soldier, alike concentrated, conscienceless and remorseless, and then—what no other people in the world has done—they have given the nation over to his guidance."

It is against this system and the principles on which it rests that the Allies are fighting. That is why this war is a War of Principles. Great Britain and France repudiate the German doctrines in theory and in practice. No such maxims or rules stand in their war code: they have not committed, and, as we trust, are incapable of committing, such offences as those I have mentioned. Neither of them desires to dominate other countries. What they seek is security for themselves and for all the nations that wish to live at peace, not being themselves threatened, not threatening their neighbours.

Two questions may now be addressed to impartial men in neutral nations.

First, how can any fair-minded citizen of a neutral nation, one who honours right and loves peace, fail to see a distinction between the conduct of the war by the Allies on the one side, and its conduct by the German, Austrian, and Turkish governments on the other? Can he not perceive what is involved for mankind at large in the victory of one or other party to this struggle or imagine what sort of a world there would be in the future if Germany were to conquer, what perils peaceable neutral nations would have to fear at the hands of a triumphant Prussian militarism?

Secondly, how can the Allies make peace until this militarism, this system which places Force above Right and denies all international morality, has been defeated? We in Britain can understand the passionate desire of humane men and women in neutral countries to see this awful war brought to a speedy end. Do we not feel that desire ourselves, we who in France and Britain are losing the flower of our youth, every household in mourning for

sons and brothers and husbands? But we also feel—those of us who have worked for peace all our lives just as much as others—that a peace made now, leaving the military system and military caste of Germany still unbroken in power, in credit and self-confidence, in its prestige and ascendancy over its own people, would be only a truce, a brief respite in a conflict which that military caste would resume as soon as it had repaired its losses. To make the sort of treaty which Germany desires, and which she intimates she might accept, would not only leave her in possession of ill-gotten gains, with no adequate reparation for the wrongs she has inflicted, but would be an acquiescence in, almost an encouragement to repeat, the methods by which she has carried on this war. Such methods need to be stamped with the brand not only of Infamy but of Failure. Nothing else will suffice to prevent them from being repeated in future. The British people do not desire to dismember Germany nor to inflict any permanent injury on the German people. But they do desire a victory sufficient to bring about a peace that will endure, not one darkened by prospects of future aggression and by the constant need of maintaining huge armaments for their own defence against that militarism which has so long threatened Europe. And in fighting for this they are fighting the battle of Neutrals also.

One more remark in conclusion. The crimes committed in the conduct of this war have been committed not by a free people but by a government which hates and fears freedom. Whether you call it an autocracy or a military oligarchy matters little. What does matter is that it is not a government which rests on public opinion and the popular will. No government created by a free people would have embraced such principles or committed such offences. Can we imagine the people of Switzerland, or Norway, or the United States, using their troops to force thousands of innocent workers into slavery? Can we suppose that the people even of Germany itself, if they had been permitted by their tyrannical rulers to know the truth about the war and how it has been conducted, would have authorized either the inhuman treatment of non-combatants in Belgium (invaded without provocation) or the tacit approval of the hideous massacres perpetrated by their Turkish allies?

This War of Principles, therefore, is a war not only for the vindication of international right, for the faith of treaties, for the protection of the innocent, but also for Liberty. No greater blow could be struck at democracy than a German victory. The spirit of Militarism is the enemy of freedom as well as of peace. Tyranny makes militarism, tyranny rules by it. This is why we in England and France trust that the peoples of all the free countries will recognize what is involved for them in this war, and will extend their moral support to a cause which is, since they love freedom, their own cause, as well as the cause of human progress.

IV

THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND*

By W. MACNEILE DIXON

[Professor in the University of Glasgow]

Germany consistently refuses all actions except on chosen ground at her own front door, where she can, when the odds are against her, withdraw her ships immediately within her protected ports and slam the door in the face of her antagonist. There only will she fight, within a few miles of her own coast, in shallow waters suitable for the operation of under-water craft, and in the immediate neighbourhood of her own minefields. Had Nelson been alive to-day he could have done no more than the British Admirals have done—offer battle to the unwilling enemy on his own terms. Germany takes only as much of the war as she wishes, Britain takes the whole, everywhere and all the time. Repeatedly Sir David Beatty has faced this situation with its attendant risks. Repeatedly with his cruising squadron he appeared within sight of the German defences, four hundred miles from his own base. If he could engage the Germans even at heavy cost to himself, "cling to them as long as his teeth would hold," in an entangling and detaining action, the Grand Fleet might reach him in time to secure an overwhelming victory. That was his hope. And let it be frankly admitted the hope was not fulfilled. At Jutland once more he took the risks—some say unwisely, for why do more than contain the German navy useless in its ports?—he incurred the inevitable losses, the main British fleet arrived in time to strike a shattering blow but failed to administer the *coup de grace.* "I can fully sympathize with his feelings," wrote Sir John Jellicoe, "when the evening mist and fading light robbed the Fleet of that complete victory for which he had manœuvred, and for which the vessels in company with him had striven so hard."

To understand, even in a measure, this immense conflict, one must bear in mind that the British Grand Fleet under Sir John Jellicoe was on May 30th actually at sea, to the north of Sir David Beatty's battle-cruisers, who, on the 31st, having completed his sweep, turned away from the south to rejoin the Commander-in-Chief. Since the tactics which led to it cannot be here disclosed let us pass at once to the encounter itself. About half-past two Beatty received signals from his light cruiser squadron that the enemy was out and in force. A seaplane scout went aloft and confirmed the signals. German

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* From "The British Navy at War" by courtesy of the author and the British Bureau of Information.

battle-cruisers were in sight, but falling back upon probably still stronger forces. To engage or not to engage was hardly Beatty's problem. Should he at all cost pursue, encounter, and detain the foe or, avoiding more than a mere exchange of shots, continue on his course to join Admiral Jellicoe? Faint heart never won a great decision. He chose the heroic, the British way, and determined to force the battle "to engage the enemy in sight." We may, perhaps, best understand the action if we divide it into three stages, (a) pursuit, (b) retreat, (c) again pursuit; the first, that in which Beatty was engaged with the enemy's battle-cruisers falling back upon their main fleet, which lasted about an hour, from 3:48 when the opening shots were fired till the German High Seas Fleet showed itself at 4:38. At this point Beatty swung round to draw the enemy toward Jellicoe approaching from the north, and the second stage of the battle began in which the British were heavily engaged with a greatly superior force, in fact, the whole German navy. They had, however, the assistance of the Fifth Battle Squadron under Evan Thomas, four powerful battleships which had come up during the first phase, fired a few shots at the extreme range of about twelve miles and took the first fire of Von Scheer's battleships. Steaming north now instead of south Beatty slackened speed to keep in touch with the heavy ships. This stage of the action also lasted about an hour or more, when about six o'clock Jellicoe came in sight five miles to the north, and the third phase began. Beatty, toward the end of the second stage, had drawn ahead of the enemy, pressing in upon and curving round his line, and now drove straight across it to the east, closing the range to 12,000 yards, with two objects, first to bring the leading German ships under concentrated fire, and second to allow a clear space for Jellicoe to come down and complete their destruction. It was a masterly manœuvre which enabled the Third Battle Cruiser Squadron, in advance of Jellicoe, under Admiral Hood, to join at once in the battle, and assist in "crumpling up" the head of the German line.

The supreme moment had come. Jellicoe's great fleet was in line behind Hood, bearing down on Von Scheer in overwhelming force. By beautiful handling the British Admiral effected the junction of his fleets in very difficult conditions. There still remains in naval warfare much of the splendid pageantry of old, which in land operations is gone beyond recall. "The grandest sight I have ever seen," wrote an officer in the fleet, "was the sight of our battle line—miles of it fading into mist—taking up their positions like clock-work and then belching forth great sheets of fire and clouds of smoke." But the prize was snatched from the British grasp. It was already seven o'clock and the evening brought with it the thick North Sea haze behind which and his own smoke screens Von Scheer turned and fled for his ports. "Great care was necessary," wrote Sir John Jellicoe, "to ensure that our own ships were not mistaken for enemy vessels." By half-past eight or nine practically all was

over, save for the British destroyer attacks, which lasted far into the darkness, on the scattered and fleeing enemy. Only two hours of a misty daylight had been left to Sir John Jellicoe to accomplish his task. Then came night, and in the night the shattered and shaken Germans crept—one is not quite clear by what route—through their minefields to the blessed security of protected harbours. Had the weather been different—well, who knows whether in that case the German Fleet would have put to sea? Now as ever in naval warfare commanders must choose conditions the most favourable to their designs. The British Admiral remained on the scene of the battle, picking up survivors from some of the smaller craft till after mid-day (1:15 p. m.) on June 1st. On that day not one German ship was in sight on a sea strewn with the tangled and shapeless wreckage of proud vessels, the melancholy litter of war.

Perhaps Jutland, inconclusive as it seemed, may yet be judged by the world the true crisis of the struggle. While Germany, after her manner, poured forth to the sceptical world tidings of amazing victory, Britain, too, after her manner, said little save bluntly to record her losses, and later published merely the reports of the Admirals engaged. They are very plain and matter of fact, these documents without brag. So they can be recommended to the attention of seekers after truth. For lovers of romance, of course, the German versions will afford brighter reading.

Here, however, is the unofficial account of a Midshipman on board one of the battleships:—

"We were all as cheery as Punch when action was sounded off. The battle-cruisers, which, by the way, were first sighted by your eldest son, who went without his tea to look out in the foretop, were away on the bow, firing like blazes, and doing a colossal turn of speed. I expect they were very pleased to see us. The battle fleet put it across them properly. We personally strafed a large battleship, which we left badly bent, and very much on fire. They fired stink shells at us, which fortunately burst some distance away. They looked as if they smelt horrible. We engaged a Zepp which showed an inclination to become pally. I think it thought we were Germans. Altogether, it was some stunt.

"Yes, you were right, I was up in the foretop and saw the whole show. I told you I was seventeen hours up there, didn't I? Simply bristling with glasses, revolvers, respirators, ear-protectors, and what-nots. I cannot imagine anything more intensely dramatic than our final junction with the battle-cruisers. They appeared on the starboard bow going a tremendous speed and firing like blazes at an enemy we could not see. Even before we opened first the colossal noise was nearly deafening. The Grand Fleet opened fire. We commenced by strafing one of the "Kaisers" that was only just visible on the horizon, going hell for leather. The whole High Sea Fleet were firing like blazes.

"It is the most extraordinary sensation I know to be sitting up there in the foretop gazing at a comparatively unruffled bit of sea, when suddenly about five immense columns of water about 100 feet high shoot up as if from nowhere, and bits of shell go rattling down into the water or else, with a noise like an express train, the projectiles go screeching overhead and fall about a mile the other side of you. You watch the enemy firing six great flashes about as many miles away, and then for fifteen seconds or so you reflect that there is about two tons of sudden death hurtling toward you. Then with a sigh of relief the splashes rise up all six of them away on the starboard bow. On the other hand, there is a most savage exultation in firing at another ship.

"You hear the order 'Fire!' the foretop gets up and hits you in the face, an enormous yellow cloud of cordite smoke—the charge weighs 2,000 lbs.—rises up and blows away just as the gentleman with the stopwatch says 'Time!' and then you see the splashes go up, perhaps between you and the enemy, behind the enemy perhaps, or, if you are lucky, a great flash breaks out on the enemy, and when the smoke has rolled away you just have time to see that she is well and truly blazing before the next salvo goes off. I had the extreme satisfaction of seeing the *Lützow* get a salvo which must have caused her furiously to sink. There are minor side-shows, too, which contribute greatly to the excitement.

"We also discharged our large pieces at the *Rostock*, but she was getting such a thin time from somebody else that we refrained from pressing the question. Her main mast and after-funnel had gone. She was quite stationary, and badly on fire. We sighted submarines, two in number, and also large numbers of enemy destroyers, one of which we soundly strafed. So soundly, in fact, that it gave up the ghost. . . .

"Well, when I climbed down from the foretop late that night I was as black as a nigger, very tired, and as hungry as a hunter, I having missed my tea. I wish you could have seen the state we were in between the decks. Water everywhere, chairs, stools, radiators, tin baths, boots, shoes, clothes, books, and every conceivable article, chucked all over the place. We didn't care a fig, because we all thought of 'Der Tag' on the morrow which we all expected. Destroyers and light cruisers were attacking like fury all night, and when I got up at the bugle 'Action!' at two A.M. I felt as if I had slept about three and a half minutes. At about three A.M. we sighted a Zepp which was vigorously fired at. It made off 'quam celerrime,' which means quick with a capital Q."

Look now a little more closely at the details and episodes of this engagement. Picture a calm and hazy sea and spread over an immense area the fleets of larger ships surrounded by screens of light cruisers and destroyers furiously engaged in encounters of their own, battles within the greater battle, and one sees how entirely this action lacks the classic simplicity of such engage-

ments as the Nile or Trafalgar. But the main movements are clear enough. The heaviest losses of the British were sustained in the earlier, of the Germans in the later, stages when the efficiency of their gunnery "became rapidly reduced under punishment, while ours was maintained throughout." Hardly was Beatty in action before he lost two battle-cruisers, *Indefatigable* and *Queen Mary*. Later *Invincible*, the flagship of the Third Cruiser Squadron, went down with Admiral Hood, who had brought his ships into "action ahead in a most inspiring manner worthy of his great naval ancestors." One may note here two difficulties of pursuit in a modern action. First, that the enemy fire is concentrated on the leading ship which can hardly escape punishment, and second, that his fast smaller craft continually present on your engaged bow discharge torpedoes and drop mines if you attempt to close him. Three armoured cruisers and eight destroyers shared the fate of the larger vessels. The German losses, on a conservative estimate, were still more severe, especially when "the head of their line was crumpled up, leaving battleships as targets for the majority of our battle-cruisers." The enemy constantly "turned away" in the last stage and under cover of smoke screens endeavoured to avoid the withering 15-inch gun fire, but at least four or five battleships and battle-cruisers, as many light cruisers, six or eight destroyers were finally lost, probably twenty vessels in all and 10,000 men.

Throughout that day of thunderous war the destroyers dashed to the torpedo attacks on the great ships, careless of the heart-shaking deluge of shells, utterly careless of life and youth, and all else save the mighty business in hand, and when night put an end to the main action, continued their work in the uncanny darkness, under the momentary glare of searchlights or the spouting flames from some wounded vessel. And all the while the unruffled sea appeared, we are told, like a marble surface when the searchlights swept it, and moving there the destroyers looked like venomous insects—"black as cockroaches on a floor." Never in the proud history of her navy have English sailors fought with more inspiring dash, more superb intrepidity. "The Skipper was perfectly wonderful," wrote one young officer to his home—"He never left the bridge for a minute for twenty-four hours, and was either on the bridge or in the chart house the whole time we were out, and I've never seen anybody so cool and unruffled. He stood there sucking his pipe as if nothing out of the ordinary were happeining." Or, again, "a little British destroyer, her midships rent by a great shell meant for a battle-cruiser, exuding steam from every pore, able to go ahead but not to steer, coming down diagonally across our line, unable to get out of anybody's way; like to be rammed by any one of a dozen ships; her syren whimpering 'Let me through, make way!'; her crew fallen in aft, dressed in life belts, ready for her final plunge—and cheering wildly as it might have been an enthusiastic crowd when the King passes. Perfectly Magnificent!" "Sir David Beatty," said

the Commander-in-Chief, "showed all his fine qualities of gallant leadership, firm determination, and correct strategical insight." "The conduct of officers and men throughout the day and night was entirely beyond praise. No word of mine can do them justice. On all sides it is reported to me that the glorious traditions of the past were most worthily upheld. I cannot adequately express the pride with which the spirit of the fleet filled me." Who will venture to add to that testimony! Let us say only that Nelson would have been proud to command such men. Nor did the British refuse their tribute to a courageous foe. They "fought," said Sir John Jellicoe, "with the gallantry that was expected of them. We particularly admired the conduct of those on board a disabled German light cruiser, which passed down the British line shortly after deployment, under a heavy fire, which was returned by the only gun left in action."

So ended the Battle of Jutland.

INCIDENTS OF THE FIGHT

THE "SHARK"

Clinging to a raft on the oil-covered water of the Jutland coast and with the great fight raging around them, a British lieutenant and a number of seamen, who had played their part in the battle, and were now at the mercy of fate, sought a solace in the hymn which comforted the victims of the *Titanic* as they passed to the Great Unknown.

They had been for some hours amidst the horrors of the din and confusion of the terrific conflict. Lack of food and exposure to the cold and wet had reduced them to a state of exhaustion.

"Let us sing something," said the young lieutenant, and the brave men started "Nearer my God to Thee," but before they had finished the hymn they were overcome by weakness and had to stop.

This story is told by Charles Herbert Smith, an A.B., who was one of the survivors from the destroyer *Shark*. Smith was landed in Hull, with five other men.

The *Shark*, as has already been stated, was one of the first British vessels to draw the fire of the German fleet.

"It was not long," said Smith, "before we drew the fire from the long line of German ships whose smoke rose on the horizon. In a few minutes the fire had become intense, and our vessel shivered and shook as shells exploded around us. Many shells fell short, but eventually the Germans got the range, and after about ten minutes one shell took our propeller and damaged our steering gear, and another penetrated our oil-tank. Being out of control and the centre of such a heavy fire we were in a precarious condition, but our commander cheered us and said we were all right.

"The dead were lying about the deck and most of the guns had been put out of action. Then the shells burst right over us, and when the smoke cleared away I saw Commander Jones and two men fighting our only remaining gun. So far Commander Jones had escaped injury. He was still cheering the men and, by working the last gun, he drove off two destroyers that were heading for us.

"Then another shell came and a fragment striking the commander on the leg, severed the limb. He remained at the gun until a torpedo struck us and we went down by the stern with our flag still flying. I slid down the deck, and the next thing I remember was striking out and swallowing mouthfuls of oily water. A raft was floating by, and I and others, including a lieutenant, got on it. We were on the raft for several hours. We saw the German fleet pass us, and then the tide carried us out of the battle line.

"The enemy's ships passed us as if they were pressing the British fleet back, but Admiral Beatty's vessels succeeded, before the arrival of the main fleet, in sending the Germans back.

"I can recollect being on the raft, and then nothing more until I woke up in the bunk of a steamer. I must have been washed off the raft, as the men of the steamer, the *Vidar*, which had rescued me, told me that they took me out of the water My last recollection is of someone calling me Charlie. It gradually dawned on me that I was on a steamer. Then came the recollection of the battle, followed by the momentary thought that I had been taken prisoner and was on my way to Germany, but the depression caused by that quickly gave place to a feeling of elation when I realized where I was and found that we were bound for my native town."

JOHN TRAVERS CORNWELL

John Travers Cornwell won the Victoria Cross by fighting a six-inch gun on board the cruiser *Chester* when all the other members of the gun crew were dead or dying. John Travers Cornwell, of H.M.S. *Chester*, is known in England as "the boy who died at the Battle of Jutland!" Other boys, just as brave, died in the same struggle and have been forgotten. The name of Cornwell will live for ever in the memory of his countrymen because he typified the sturdy courage and sense of duty characteristic of his class in the British Naval service. Cornwell was sixteen years old, a bright, handsome youngster beloved of all the ship's company. After the battle he was found in one of the most exposed parts of the deck, mortally wounded, with the dead and dying around the gun at which he was stationed, and which, to the last, when his comrades had fallen, he had tried to work single-handed. When asked why he hadn't dragged himself, like many other wounded, to a less exposed place after his gun had been put out of action, the boy replied quite simply, "I

stayed because I thought I might be wanted." Cornwell was buried in a country churchyard, and nothing more was heard of his unaffected heroism until Admiral Jellicoe's report of the Battle of Jutland was published describing the circumstances of the boy's death, and paying a sailor's tribute to his memory. Almost immediately one of those curious waves of sentiment, seemingly so inconsistent with the usual ideas held abroad of the phlegmatic Briton, swept the country. The body of John Travers Cornwell was exhumed, and a great public funeral, attended by the King and accompanied by the most impressive scenes, was given in London. A memorial fund, which has since surpassed a total of a million dollars, was started. The V.C., most coveted of all British decorations, was posthumously conferred. Hospital cots and scholarships were endowed in honour of the boy, and to-day, in every school in England as well as Britain's dominions overseas, there is a picture of the brave young sailor whose name will be handed down to generation after generation of Britons as the type of lad whose life and death was a pattern of devotion to duty and supreme loyalty to his country in the hour of her supreme need.

V

MY VISIT TO THE DARDANELLES*

By HENRY MORGENTHAU

[Formerly American Ambassador to Turkey]

When the situation had reached this exciting stage Enver asked me to visit the Dardanelles. He still insisted that the fortifications were impregnable and he could not understand, he said, the panic which was then raging in Constantinople. He had visited the Dardanelles himself, had inspected every gun and every emplacement, and was entirely confident that his soldiers could hold off the Allied fleet indefinitely. He had taken Talaat down, and by doing so he had considerably eased that statesman's fears. It was Enver's conviction that if I could visit the fortifications I would be persuaded that the fleets could never get through and that I would thus be able to give such assurances to the people that the prevailing excitement would subside. I disregarded certain natural doubts as to whether an ambassador should expose himself to the dangers of such a situation—the ships were bombarding nearly every day—and promptly accepted Enver's invitation.

On the morning of the 15th of March, 1915, we left Constantinople on the *Yuruk*. Enver himself accompanied us as far as Panderma, an Asiatic town on the Sea of Marmora. The party included several other notables: Ibrahim Bey, the Minister of Justice; Husni Pasha, the general who had commanded the army which had deposed Abdul Hamid in the Young Turk revolution; and Senator Cherif Djafer Pasha, an Arab and a direct descendant of the Prophet. A particularly congenial companion was Fuad Pasha, an old field marshal, who had led an adventurous career; despite his age, he had an immense capacity for enjoyment, was a huge feeder and a capacious drinker, and had as many stories to tell of exile, battle, and hair-breadth escapes as Othello. All of these men were much older than Enver and all of them were of far more distinguished lineage, yet they treated this stripling with the utmost deference.

Enver seemed particularly glad of this opportunity to discuss the situation. Immediately after breakfast, he took me aside and together we went up to the deck. The day was a beautiful sunny one and the sky in the Marmora was that deep blue which we find only in this part of the world. What most impressed me was the intense quiet, the almost desolate inactivity of these silent waters. Our ship was almost the only one in sight, and this inland sea, which

*From "Ambassador Morgenthau's Story." Copyright, Doubleday, Page & Co.

in ordinary times was one of the world's greatest commercial highways, was now practically a primeval waste. The whole scene was merely a reflection of the great triumph which German diplomacy had accomplished in the Near East. For nearly six months not a Russian merchant ship had passed through the Strait. All the commerce of Rumania and Bulgaria, which had normally found its way to Europe across this inland sea, had long since disappeared. The ultimate significance of all this desolation was that Russia was blockaded and completely isolated from her allies. How much that one fact has meant in the history of the world for the last three years! And now England and France were seeking to overcome this disadvantage; to link up their own military resources with those of their great eastern ally, and to restore to the Dardanelles and the Marmora the thousands of ships that meant Russia's existence as a military and economic—and even, as subsequent events have shown, as a political—power. We were approaching the scene of one of the great crises of the war.

Would England and her allies succeed in this enterprise? Would their ships at the Dardanelles smash the fortifications, break through, and again make Russia a permanent force in the war? That was the main subject which Enver and I discussed, as for nearly three hours we walked up and down the deck. Enver again referred to the "silly panic" that had seized nearly all classes in the capital. "Even though Bulgaria and Greece both turn against us," he said, "we shall defend Constantinople to the end. We have plenty of guns, plenty of ammunition, and we have these on *terra firma*, whereas the English and French batteries are floating ones. And the natural advantages of the Strait are so great that the warships can make little progress against them. I do not care what other people may think. I have studied this problem more thoroughly than any of them, and I feel that I am right. As long as I am at the head of the War Department, we shall not give up. Indeed, I do not know just what these English and French battleships are driving at. Suppose that they rush the Dardanelles, get here into the Marmora, and reach Constantinople; what good will that do them? They can bombard and destroy the city, I admit; but they cannot capture it, as they have no troops to land. Unless they do bring a large army, they will really be caught in a trap. They can perhaps stay here for two or three weeks until their food and supplies are all exhausted and then they will have to go back—rush the Strait again, and again run the risk of annihilation. In the meantime, we would have repaired the forts, brought in troops, and made ourselves ready for them. It seems to me to be a very foolish enterprise."

ENVER SEES HIMSELF IN HISTORY

I have already told how Enver had taken Napoleon as his model, and in this Dardanelles expedition he now apparently saw a Napoleonic opportunity.

As we were pacing the deck he stopped a moment, looked at me earnestly, and said:

"I shall go down in history as the man who demonstrated the vulnerability of England and her fleet. I shall show that her navy is not invincible. I was in England a few years before the war and discussed England's position with many of her leading men, such as Asquith, Churchill, Haldane. I told them that their course was wrong. Winston Churchill declared that England could defend herself with her navy alone, and that she needed no large army. I told Churchill that no great empire could last that did not have both an army and a navy. I found that Churchill's opinion was the one that prevailed everywhere in England. There was only one man I met who agreed with me, that was Lord Roberts. Well, Churchill has now sent his fleet down here—perhaps to show me that his navy can do all that he said it could do. Now we'll see."

Enver seemed to regard this naval expedition as a personal challenge from Mr. Churchill to himself—almost like a continuation of their argument in London.

"You, too, should have a large army," said Enver, referring to the United States.

"I do not believe," he went on, "that England is trying to force the Dardanelles because Russia has asked her to. When I was in England I discussed with Churchill the possibility of a general war. He asked me what Turkey would do in such a case, and said that, if we took Germany's side, the British fleet would force the Dardanelles and capture Constantinople. Churchill is not trying to help Russia—he is carrying out the threat made to me at that time."

Enver spoke with the utmost determination and conviction; he said that nearly all the damage inflicted on the outside forts had been repaired, and that the Turks had methods of defence the existence of which the enemy little suspected. He showed great bitterness against the English; he accused them of attempting to bribe Turkish officials and even said that they had instigated attempts upon his own life. On the other hand, he displayed no particular friendliness toward the Germans. Wangenheim's overbearing manners had caused him much irritation, and the Turks, he said, got on none too well with the German officers.

"The Turks and Germans," he added, "care nothing for each other. We are with them because it is our interest to be with them; they are with us because that is their interest. Germany will back Turkey just so long as that helps Germany. Turkey will back Germany just so long as that helps Turkey."

Enver seemed much impressed at the close of our interview with the intimate personal relations which we had established with each other. He apparently believed that he, the great Enver, the Napoleon of the Turkish Revolu-

tion, had unbended in discussing his nation's affairs with a mere ambassador; colossal vanity, as I have before remarked, was one of his strong points.

"You know," he said, "that there is no one in Germany with whom the Emperor talks as intimately as I have talked with you to-day."

We reached Panderma about two o'clock. Here Enver and his auto were put ashore and our party started again, our boat arriving at Gallipoli late in the afternoon. We anchored in the harbour and spent the night on board. All the evening we could hear the guns bombarding the fortifications, but these reminders of war and death did not affect the spirits of my Turkish hosts. The occasion was for them a great lark; they had spent several months in hard, exacting work, and now they behaved like boys suddenly let out for a vacation. They made jokes, told stories, sang the queerest kinds of songs, and played childish pranks upon one another. The venerable Fuad, despite his nearly ninety years, developed great qualities as an entertainer and the fact that his associates made him the butt of most of their horse-play apparently only added to his enjoyment of the occasion. The amusement reached its height when one of his friends surreptitiously poured him a glass of eau-de-cologne. The old gentleman looked at the new drink a moment and then diluted it with water. I was told that the proper way of testing *raki*, the popular Turkish tipple, is by mixing it with water; if it turns white under this treatment, it is the real thing and may be safely drunk. Apparently water has the same effect upon eau-de-cologne, for the contents of Fuad's glass, after this test, turned white. The old gentleman, therefore, poured the whole thing down his throat without a grimace—much to the hilarious entertainment of his tormentors.

In the morning we started again. We now had fairly arrived in the Dardanelles, and from Gallipoli we had a sail of nearly twenty-five miles to Tchanak Kalé. For the most part this section of the Strait is uninteresting and, from a military point of view, it is unimportant. The stream is about two miles wide, both sides are low-lying and marshy, and only a few scrambling villages show any signs of life. I was told that there were a few ancient fortifications, their rusty guns pointing toward the Marmora, the emplacements having been erected there in the early part of the Nineteenth Century for the purpose of preventing hostile ships entering from the north. These fortifications, however, were so inconspicuous that I could not see them; my hosts informed me that they had no fighting power, and that, indeed, there was nothing in the northern part of the Strait, from Point Nagara to the Marmora, that could offer resistance to any modern fleet. The chief interest which I found in this part of the Dardanelles was purely historic and legendary. The ancient town of Lampsacus appeared in the modern Lapsaki, just across from Gallipoli; and Nagara Point is the site of the ancient Abydos, from which village Leander used to swim nightly across the Hellespont to Hero—a feat which was repeated

about one hundred years ago by Lord Byron. Here also Xerxes crossed from Asia to Greece on a bridge of boats, embarking on that famous expedition which was to make him master of the world. The tribe of Xerxes, I thought, as I passed the scene of his exploit, is not yet entirely extinct! The Germans and Turks had found a less romantic use for this, the narrowest part of the Dardanelles, for here they had stretched a cable and anti-submarine barrage of mines and nets—a device, which as I shall describe, did not keep the English and French under-water boats out of the Marmora and the Bosphorus. It was not until we rounded this historic point of Nagara that the dull monotony of flat shores gave place to a more diversified landscape. On the European side the cliffs now began to descend precipitously to the water, reminding me of our own Palisades along the Hudson, and I obtained glimpses of the hills and mountain ridges that afterward proved such tragical stumbling blocks to the valiant Allied armies. The configuration of the land south of Nagara, with its many hills and ridges, made it plain why the military engineers had selected this stretch of the Dardanelles as the section best adapted to defence. Our boat was now approaching what was perhaps the most commanding point in the whole strait—the city of Tchanak, or, to give it its modern European name, of Dardanelles. In normal times this was a thriving port of 16,000 people, its houses built of wood, the headquarters of a considerable trade in wool and other products, and for centuries it has been an important military station. Now, excepting for the soldiers, it was deserted, the large civilian population having been moved into Anatolia. The British fleet, we were told, had bombarded this city; yet this statement seemed hardly probable, for I saw only a single house that had been hit, evidently by a stray shell which had been aimed at the near-by fortifications.

Djevad Pasha, the Turkish Commander-in-Chief at the Dardanelles, met us and escorted our party to headquarters. Djevad was a man of culture and of pleasing and cordial manners; as he spoke excellent German I had no need of an interpreter. I was much impressed by the deference with which the German officers treated him; that he was the Commander-in-Chief in this theatre of war and that the generals of the Kaiser were his subordinates was made plainly apparent. As we passed into his office, Djevad stopped in front of a piece of a torpedo, mounted in the middle of the hall, evidently as a souvenir.

"There is the great criminal!" he said, calling my attention to the relic.

About this time the newspapers were hailing the exploit of an English submarine, which had sailed from England to the Dardanelles, passed under the minefield, and torpedoed the Turkish warship *Mesudié*.

"That's the torpedo that did it!" said Djevad. "You'll see the wreck of the ship when you go down."

The first fortification I visited was that of Anadolu Hamidié (that is Asiatic Hamidié), located on the water's edge just outside of Tchanak. My first

impression was that I was in Germany. The officers were practically all Germans and everywhere Germans were building up buttresses with sacks of sand and in other ways strengthening the emplacements. Here German, not Turkish, was the language heard on every side. Oberst Wehrle, who conducted me over these batteries, took the greatest delight in showing them. He had the simple pride of the artist in his work, and told me of the happiness that had come into his days when Germany had at last found herself at war. All his life, he said, he had spent in military practices, and, like most Germans, he had become tired of manœuvres, sham battles, and other forms of mimic hostilities. Yet he was approaching fifty, he had become a colonel, and he was fearful that his career would close without actual military experience—and then the splendid thing had happened and here he was, fighting a real English enemy, firing real guns and shells! There was nothing brutal about Wehrle's manners; he was a "*gemütlich*" gentleman from Baden, and thoroughly likable; yet he was all aglow with the spirit of "Der Tag." His attitude was simply that of a man who had spent his lifetime learning a trade and who now rejoiced at the chance of exercising it. But he furnished an illuminating light on the German military character and the forces that had really caused the war.

Feeling myself so completely in German country I asked Colonel Wehrle why there were so few Turks on this side of the Strait. "You won't ask me that question this afternoon." he said, smiling, "when you go over to the other side."

The location of Anadolu Hamidié seemed ideal. It stands right at tne water's edge, and consists—or it did then—of ten guns, every one completely sweeping the Dardanelles. Walking upon the parapet, I had a clear view of the Strait, Kum Kalé, at the entrance, about fifteen miles away, standing out conspicuously. No warship could enter these waters without immediately coming within complete sight of her gunners. Yet the fortress itself, to an unprofessional eye like my own, was not particularly impressive. The parapet and traverses were merely mounds of earth, and stand to-day practically as they were finished by their French constructors in 1837. There is a general belief that the Germans had completely modernized the Dardanelles defences, but this was not true at that time. The guns defending Fort Anadolu Hamidié were more than thirty years old, all being the Krupp model of 1885, and the rusted exteriors of some of them gave evidence of their age. Their extreme range was only about nine miles, while the range of the battleships opposing them was about ten miles, and that of the *Queen Elizabeth* was not far from eleven. The figures which I have given for Anadolu Hamidié apply also to practically all the guns at the other effective fortifications. So far as the advantage of range was concerned, therefore, the Allied fleet had a decided superiority, the *Queen Elizabeth* alone having them all practically at her mercy.

Nor did the fortifications contain very considerable stores of ammunition. At that time the European and American papers were printing stories that trainloads of shells and guns were coming by way of Rumania from Germany to the Dardanelles. From facts which I learned on this trip and subsequently I am convinced that these reports were pure fiction. A small number of "red heads"—that is, non-armour-piercing projectiles useful only for fighting landing parties—had been brought from Adrianople and were reposing in Hamidiè at the time of my visit, but these were small in quantity and of no value in fighting ships. I lay this stress upon Hamidié because this was the most important fortification in the Dardanelles. Throughout the whole bombardment it attracted more of the Allied fire than any other position, and it inflicted at least 60 per cent. of all the damage that was done to the attacking ships. It was Anadolu Hamidié which, in the great bombardment of March 18th, sank the *Bouvet*, the French battleship, and which in the course of the whole attack had disabled several other units. All its officers were Germans and 85 per cent. of the men on duty came from the crews of the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*.

Getting into the automobile, we sped along the military road to Dardanos, passing on the way the wreck of the *Mesudié*. The Dardanos battery was as completely Turkish as the Hamidié was German. The guns at Dardanos were somewhat more modern than those at Hamidié—they were the Krupp model of 1905. Here also was stationed the only new battery which the Germans had established up to the time of my visit; it consisted of several guns which they had taken from the German and Turkish warships then lying in the Bosphorus. A few days before our inspection the Allied fleet had entered the Bay of Erenkui and had submitted Dardanos to a terrific bombardment, the evidences of which I saw on every hand. The land for nearly half a mile about seemed to have been completely churned up; it looked like photographs I had seen of the battlefields in France. The strange thing was that, despite all this punishment, the batteries themselves remained intact; not a single gun, my guides told me, had been destroyed.

"After the war is over," said General Mertens, "we are going to establish a big tourist resort here, build a hotel, and sell relics to you Americans. We shall not have to do much excavating to find them—the British fleet is doing that for us now."

This sounded like a passing joke, yet the statement was literally true. Dardanos, where this emplacement is located, was one of the famous cities of the ancient world; in Homeric times it was part of the principality of Priam. Fragments of capitals and columns are still visible. And the shells from the Allied fleet were now ploughing up many relics which had been buried for thousands of years. One of my friends picked up a water jug which had perhaps been used in the days of Troy. The effectiveness of modern gunfire in

excavating these evidences of a long-lost civilization was striking—though unfortunately the relics did not always come intact to the surface.

The Turkish generals were extremely proud of the fight which this Dardanos battery had made against the British ships. They would lead me to the guns that had done particularly good service and pat them affectionately. For my benefit Djevad called out Lieutenant Hassan, the Turkish officer who had defended this position. He was a little fellow, with jet-black hair, black eyes, extremely modest and almost shrinking in the presence of these great generals. Djevad patted Hassan on both cheeks, while another high Turkish officer stroked his hair; one would have thought that he was a faithful dog who had just performed some meritorious service.

"It is men like you of whom great heroes are made," said General Djevad. He asked Hassan to describe the attack and the way it had been met. The embarrassed lieutenant quietly told his story, though he was moved almost to tears by the appreciation of his exalted chiefs.

"There is a great future for you in the army," said General Djevad, as we parted from this hero.

Poor Hassan's "future" came two days afterward when the Allied fleet made its greatest attack. One of the shells struck his dugout, which caved in, killing the boy. Yet his behaviour on the day I visited his battery showed that he regarded the praise of his general as sufficient compensation for all that he had suffered or all that he might suffer.

I was much puzzled by the fact that the Allied fleet, despite its large expenditures of ammunition, had not been able to hit this Dardanos emplacement. I naturally thought at first that such a failure indicated poor marksmanship, but my German guides said that that was not the case. All this misfire merely illustrated once more the familiar fact that a rapidly manœuvring battleship is under great disadvantage in shooting at a fixed fortification. But there was another point involved in the Dardanos battery. My hosts called my attention to its location; it was perched on the top of the hill, in full view of the ships, forming itself a part of the skyline. Dardanos was merely five steel turrets, each with a gun approached by a winding trench.

"That," they said, "is the most difficult thing in the world to hit. It is so distinct that it looks easy, but the whole thing is an illusion."

I do not understand completely the optics of the situation; but it seems that the skyline creates a kind of mirage, so that it is practically impossible to hit anything at that point, except by accident. The gunner might get what was apparently a perfect sight, yet his shell would go wild. The record of Dardanos had been little short of marvellous. Up to March 18th, the ships had fired at it about 4,000 shells. One turret had been hit by a splinter, which had also scratched the paint, another had been hit and slightly bent in, and another had been hit near the base and a piece about the size of a man's hand

had been knocked out. But not a single gun had been even slightly damaged. Eight men had been killed, including Lieutenant Hassan, and about forty had been wounded. That was the extent of the destruction.

"It was the optical illusion that saved Dardanos," one of the Germans remarked.

Again getting into the automobile we rode along the shore, my host calling my attention to the minefields, which stretched from Chanak southward about seven miles. In this area the Germans and Turks had scattered nearly 400 mines. They told me with a good deal of gusto that the Russians had furnished a considerable number of these destructive engines. Day after day Russian destroyers sowed mines at the Black Sea entrance to the Bosphorus, hoping that they would float down stream and fulfil their appointed task. Every morning Turkish and German mine sweepers would go up, fish out these mines, and place them in the Dardanelles.

The battery at Erenkeui had also been subjected to a heavy bombardment, but it had suffered little. Unlike Dardanos, it was situated back of a hill, completely shut out from view. In order to fortify this spot, I was told, the Turks had been compelled practically to dismantle the fortifications of the Inner Strait—that section of the stream which extends from Chanak to Point Nagara. This was the reason why this latter part of the Dardanelles was now practically unfortified. The guns that had been moved for this purpose were old-style Krupp pieces of the model of 1885.

South of Erenkeui, on the hills bordering the road, the Germans had introduced an innovation. They had found several Krupp howitzers left over from the Bulgarian War and had installed them on concrete foundations. Each battery had four or five of these emplacements so that as I approached them, I found several substantial bases that apparently had no guns. I was mystified further at the sight of a herd of buffaloes—I think I counted sixteen engaged in the operation—hauling one of these howitzers from one emplacement to another. This, it seems, was part of the plan of defence. As soon as the dropping shells indicated that the fleet had obtained the range, the howitzer would be moved, with the aid of buffalo teams, to another concrete emplacement.

"We have even a better trick than that," remarked one of the officers. They called out a sergeant, and recounted his achievement. This soldier was the custodian of a contraption which, at a distance, looked like a real gun, but which, when I examined it near at hand, was apparently an elongated section of sewer pipe. Back of a hill, entirely hidden from the fleet, was placed the gun with which this sergeant had coöperated. The two were connected by telephone. When the command came to fire, the gunner in charge of the howitzer would discharge his shell, while the man in charge of the sewer pipe would burn several pounds of black powder and send forth a conspicuous cloud

of inky smoke. Not unnaturally the Englishmen and Frenchmen on the ships would assume that the shells speeding in their direction came from the visible smoke cloud and would proceed to centre all their attention upon that spot. The space around this burlesque gun was pock-marked with shell holes; the sergeant in charge, I was told, had attracted more than 500 shots, while the real artillery piece still remained intact and undetected.

From Erenkeui we motored back to General Djevad's headquarters, where we had lunch. Djevad took me up to an observation post, and there before my eyes I had the beautiful blue expanse of the Ægean. I could see the entrances to the Dardanelles, Sedd-ul-Bahr and Kum Kalé standing like the guardians of a gateway, with the rippling sunny waters stretching between. Far out I saw the majestic ships of England and France sailing across the entrance, and still farther away, I caught a glimpse of the island of Tenedos, behind which we knew that a still larger fleet lay concealed. Naturally this prospect brought to mind a thousand historic and legendary associations, for there is probably no single spot in the world more crowded with poetry and romance. Evidently my Turkish escort, General Djevad, felt the spell, for he took a telescope and pointed at a bleak expanse, perhaps ten miles away.

"Look at that spot," he said, handing me the glass. "Do you know what that is?"

I looked but could not identify this sandy beach.

"Those are the plains of Troy," he said. "And the river that you see winding in and out," he added, "we call it the Mendere, but Homer knew it as the Scamander. Back of us, only a few miles away, is Mount Ida."

Then he turned his glass out to sea, swept the field where the British ships lay, and again asked me to look at an indicated spot. I immediately brought within view a magnificent English warship, all stripped for battle, quietly steaming along like a man walking on patrol duty.

"That," said General Djevad, "is the *Agamemnon!*"

"Shall I fire a shot at her?" he asked me.

"Yes, if you'll promise me not to hit her," I answered.

We lunched at headquarters, where we were joined by Admiral Usedom, General Mertens, and General Pomiankowsky, the Austrian Military Attaché at Constantinople. The chief note in the conversation was one of absolute confidence in the future. Whatever the diplomats and politicians in Constantinople may have thought, these men, Turks and Germans, had no expectation—at least their conversation betrayed none—that the Allied fleets would pass their defences. What they seemed to hope for above everything was that their enemies would make another attack.

"If we could only get a chance at the *Queen Elizabeth!*" said one eager German, referring to the greatest ship in the British navy, then lying off the entrance.

As the Rhine wine began to disappear, their eagerness for the combat increased.

"If the damn fools would only make a landing!" exclaimed one—I quote his precise words.

The Turkish and German officers, indeed, seemed to vie with each other in expressing their readiness for the fray. Probably a good deal of this was bravado, intended for my consumption—indeed, I had private information that their real estimate of the situation was much less reassuring. Now, however, they declared that the war had presented no real opportunity for the German and English navies to measure swords, and for this reason the Germans at the Dardanelles welcomed this chance to try the issue.

Having visited all the important places on the Anatolian side, we took a launch and sailed over to the Gallipoli peninsula. We almost had a disastrous experience on this trip. As we approached the Gallipoli shore, our helmsman was asked if he knew the location of the minefield and if he could steer through the channel. He said "yes" and then steered directly for the mines! Fortunately the other men noticed the mistake in time, and so we arrived safely at Kilid-ul-Bahr. The batteries here were of about the same character as those on the other side; they formed one of the main defences of the Strait. Here everything, so far as a layman could judge, was in excellent condition, barring the fact that the artillery pieces were of old design and the ammunition not at all plentiful.

The batteries showed signs of a heavy bombardment. None had been destroyed, but shell holes surrounded the fortification. My Turkish and German friends looked at these evidences of destruction rather seriously and they were outspoken in their admiration for the accuracy of the Allied fire.

"How do they ever get the range?" This was the question they were asking each other. What made the shooting so remarkable was the fact that it came, not from Allied ships in the Strait, but from ships stationed in the Ægean Sea, on the other side of the Gallipoli peninsula. The gunners had never seen their target, but had had to fire at a distance of nearly ten miles; over high hills, and yet many of their shells had barely missed the batteries at Kilid-ul-Bahr.

When I was there, however, the place was quiet, for no fighting was going on that day. For my particular benefit the officers put one of their gun crews through a drill, so that I could obtain a perfect picture of the behaviour of the Turks in action. In their minds' eyes these artillerists now saw the English ships advancing within range, all their guns pointed to destroy the followers of the Prophet. The bugler blew his horn, and the whole company rushed to their appointed places. Some were bringing shells, others opening the breeches of the guns, others taking the ranges, others straining at pulleys, and others were putting the charges into place. Everything was quickness

and alertness; evidently the Germans had been excellent instructors, but there was more to it than German military precision, for the men's faces lighted up with all that fanaticism whch supplies the morale of Turkish soldiers. These gunners momentarily imagined that they were shooting once more at the infidel English, and the exercise was a congenial one. Above the shouts of all I could hear the singsong chant of the leader, intoning the prayer with which the Moslem has rushed to battle for thirteen centuries:

"Allah is great, there is but one God, and Mohammed is his Prophet!"

When I looked upon these frenzied men, and saw so plainly written in their faces their uncontrollable hatred of the unbelievers, I called to mind what the Germans had said in the morning about the wisdom of not putting Turkish and German soldiers together. I am quite sure that, had this been done, here at least the "Holy War" would have proved a success, and that the Turks would have vented their hatred of Christians on those who happened to be nearest at hand, for the moment overlooking the fact that they were allies.

I returned to Constantinople that evening, and two days afterward, on March 18th, the Allied fleet made its greatest attack. As all the world knows, that attack proved disastrous to the Allies. The outcome was the sinking of the *Bouvet*, the *Ocean*, and the *Irresistible* and the serious crippling of four other vessels. Of the sixteen ships engaged in this battle of the 18th, seven were thus put temporarily or permanently out of action. Naturally the Germans and Turks rejoiced over this victory. The police went around, and ordered householders each to display a prescribed number of flags in honour of the event. The Turkish people have so little spontaneous patriotism or enthusiasm of any kind that they would never decorate their establishments without such definite orders! As a matter of fact, neither Germans nor Turks regarded this celebration too seriously, for they were not yet persuaded that they had really won a victory. Most still believed that the Allied fleets would succeed in forcing their way through. The only question, they said, was whether the Entente was ready to sacrifice the necessary number of ships. Neither Wangenheim nor Pallavicini believed that the disastrous experience of the 18th would end the naval attack, and for days they anxiously waited for the fleet to return. This was the general expectation, for no one believed that the Allies, after making this great demonstration, would accept defeat after the loss of only three ships. The high tension lasted for days and weeks after the repulse of the 18th. We were still momentarily expecting the renewal of the attack. But the great armada never returned.

Should it have come back? Could the Allied ships really have captured Constantinople? I am constantly asked this question. As a layman my own opinion can have little value, but I have quoted the opinions of the German generals and admirals, and of the Turks—practically all of whom, excepting Enver, believed that the enterprise would succeed—and I am half inclined to

believe that Enver's attitude was merely a case of graveyard whistling. In what I now have to say on this point, therefore, I wish it understood that I am not giving my own views, but merely those of the officials then in Turkey who were best qualified to judge.

Enver had told me, in our talk on the deck of the *Yuruk*, that he had "plenty of guns—plenty of ammunition." But this statement was not true. A glimpse at the map will show why Turkey was not receiving munitions from Germany or Austria at that time. The fact was that Turkey was just as completely isolated from her allies then as was Russia. There are two railroad lines leading from Constantinople to Germany. One goes by way of Bulgaria and Serbia. Bulgaria was then not an ally; even though she had winked at the passage of guns and shells, this line could not have been used, since Serbia, who controlled the vital link extending from Nish to Belgrade, was still intact. The other railroad line goes through Rumania, by way of Bucharest. This route was independent of Serbia, and, had the Rumanian Government consented, it would have formed a clear route from the Krupps to the Dardanelles. The fact that munitions could be sent off with the connivance of the Rumanian Government perhaps accounts for the suspicion that guns and shells were going by that route. Day after day the French and British ministers protested at Bucharest against this alleged violation of neutrality, only to be met with angry denials that the Germans were using this line. There is no doubt that now the Rumanian Government was perfectly honourable in making these denials. It is not unlikely that the Germans themselves started all these stories, merely to fool the Allied fleet into the belief that their supplies were inexhaustible.

"WE SHALL TAKE TO THE ANATOLIAN HILLS"

Let us suppose that the Allies had returned, say on the morning of the 19th, what would have happened? The one overwhelming fact is that the fortifications were very short of ammunition. They had almost reached the limit of their resisting powers when the British fleet passed out on the afternoon of the 18th. I had secured permission for Mr. George A. Schreiner, the well-known American correspondent of the Associated Press, to visit the Dardanelles on this occasion. On the night of the 18th, this correspondent discussed the situation with General Mertens, who was the chief technical officer at the Strait. General Mertens admitted that the outlook was very discouraging for the defence.

"We expect that the British will come back early to-morrow morning," he said, "and if they do we may be able to hold out for a few hours."

General Mertens did not declare in so many words that the ammunition was practically exhausted, but Mr. Schreiner discovered that such was the case. The fact was that Fort Hamidié, the most powerful defence on the Asiatic side, had just seventeen armour-piercing shells left, while at Kilid-ul-

Bahr, which was the main defence on the European side, there were precisely ten.

"I should advise you to get up at six o'clock to-morrow morning," said General Mertens, "and take to the Anatolian hills. That's what we are going to do."

The troops at all the fortifications had their orders to man the guns until the last shell had been fired and then to abandon the forts.

Once these defences became helpless, the problem of the Allied fleet would have been a simple one. The only bar to their progress would have been the mine field, which stretched from a point about two miles north of Erenkeui to Kilid-ul-Bahr. But the Allied fleet had plenty of mine sweepers, which could have made a channel in a few hours. North of Tchanak, as I have already explained, there were a few guns, but they were of the 1878 model, and could not discharge projectiles that could pierce modern armour plate. North of Point Nagara there were only two batteries, and both dated from 1835! Thus, once having silenced the outer forts there would have been nothing to bar the passage to Constantinople except the German and Turkish warships. The *Goeben* was the only first-class fighting ship in either fleet, and it would not have lasted long against the *Queen Elizabeth*. The disproportion in the strength of the opposing fleets, indeed, was so enormous that it is doubtful whether there would ever have been an engagement.

OTTOMAN STATE WAS ABOUT TO DISSOLVE

Thus the Allied fleet would have appeared before Constantinople on the morning of the 20th. What would have happened then? We have heard much discussion as to whether this purely naval attack was justified. Enver, in his conversation with me, had laid much stress on the absurdity of sending a fleet to Constantinople, supported by no adequate landing force, and much of the criticism passed upon the Dardanelles expedition since has centred on that point. Yet it is my opinion that this purely naval attack was justified. I base this judgment purely upon the political situation which then existed in Turkey. Under ordinary circumstances, such an enterprise would probably have been a foolish one, but the political conditions in Constantinople then were not ordinary. There was no solidly established government in Turkey at that time. A political committee, not exceeding forty members, headed by Talaat, Enver, and Djemal, controlled the central government, but their authority throughout the empire was exceedingly tenuous. As a matter of fact, the whole Ottoman State, on that 18th day of March, 1915, when the Allied fleet abandoned the attack, was on the brink of dissolution. All over Turkey ambitious chieftains had arisen, who were momentarily expecting the fall, and who were looking for the opportunity to seize their parts of the inheritance. As previously described, Djemal had already or-

ganized practically an independent government in Syria. In Smyrna Rahmi Bey, the Governor-General, had often disregarded the authorities in the capital. In Adrianople, Hadji Adil, one of the most courageous Turks of the time, was making his plans to set up an independent government. Arabia was already practically an independent nation. Among the subject races the spirit of revolt was rapidly spreading. The Greeks and the Armenians would also have welcomed an opportunity to strengthen the hands of the Allies. The existing financial and industrial conditions seemed to make revolution inevitable. Many farmers went on strike; they had no seeds and would not accept them as a gift from the Government because, they said, as soon as their crops should be garnered the armies would immediately requisition them. As for Constantinople, the populace there and the best elements among the Turks, far from opposing the arrival of the Allied fleet, would have welcomed it with joy. The Turks themselves were praying that the British and French would take their city, for this would relieve them of the controlling gang, emancipate them from the hated Germans, bring about peace, and end their miseries.

TALAAT HAS AN AUTOMOBILE READY FOR ESCAPE

No one understood this better than Talaat. He was taking no chances on making an expeditious retreat, in case the Allied fleet appeared before the city. For several months the Turkish leaders had been casting envious glances at a Minerva automobile that had been reposing in the Belgian legation ever since Turkey's declaration of war. Talaat finally obtained possession of the coveted prize. He had obtained somewhere another automobile, which he had loaded with extra tires, gasolene, and all the other essentials of a protracted journey. This was evidently intended to accompany the more pretentious machine as a kind of "mother ship." Talaat stationed these automobiles on the Asiatic side of the city with chauffeurs constantly at hand. Everything was prepared to leave for the interior of Asia Minor at a moment's notice.

But the great Allied armada never returned to the attack.

TWO MYSTIFIED GERMAN STATESMEN

About a week after this momentous defeat, I happened to drop in at the German Embassy. Wangenheim had a distinguished visitor whom he had asked me to meet. I went into his private office and there was Von der Goltz Pasha, recently returned from Belgium, where he had served as governor. I must admit that, meeting Von der Goltz thus informally, I had difficulty in reconciling his personality with all the stories that were then coming out of Belgium. That morning this mild-mannered, spectacled gentleman seemed sufficiently quiet and harmless. Nor did he look his age

GASES AND TANKS



A LIQUID FIRE ATTACK

Liquid fire, like so many of Germany's diabolical innovations in warfare, inflicted agonizing suffering and death upon the relatively few caught by it without accomplishing any genuine military results



Courtesy British Bureau of Information

"THE GAS MASK"

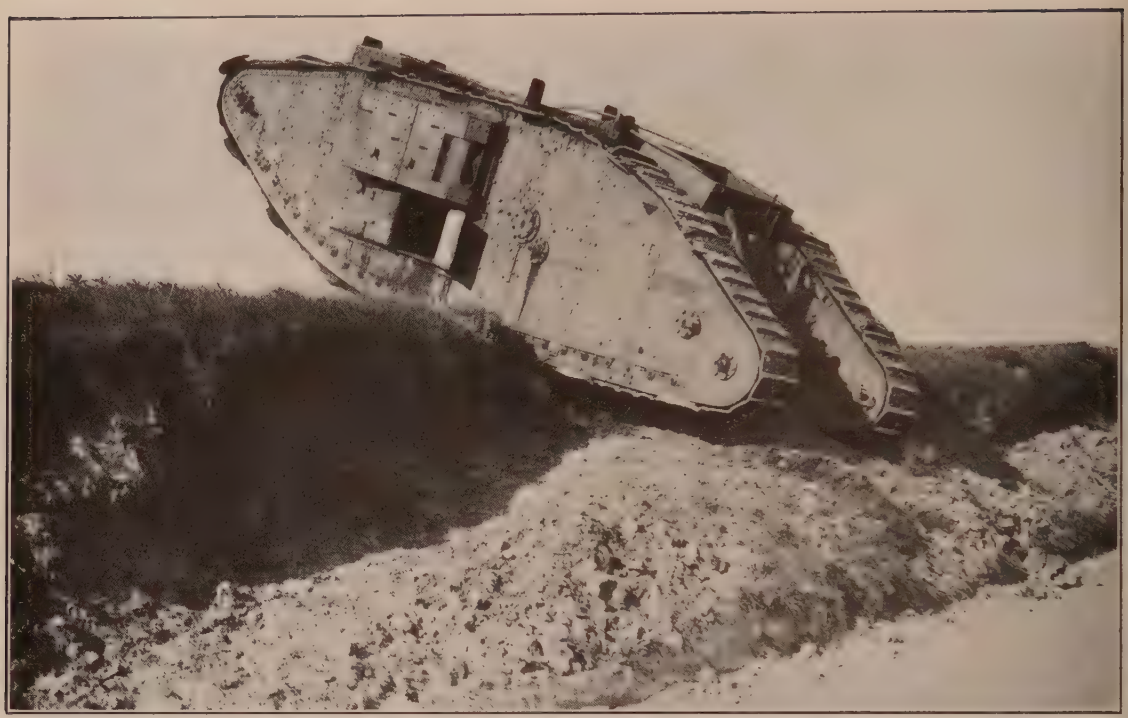
This picture was drawn by the well-known British artist, Eric Kennington. Those who know modern war at first hand say that it is absolutely accurate in all its details



Courtesy Foreign Service Committee, Aero Club of America

ASPHYXIATING GASES IN USE

Gases, the soldier's most dreaded peril, advancing to the attack before a favouring wind



From British Bureau of Information

A TANK TAKING A STEEP BANK

"They take ditches like kangaroos. They simply love shell craters."—*Philip Gibbs*



From British Bureau of Information

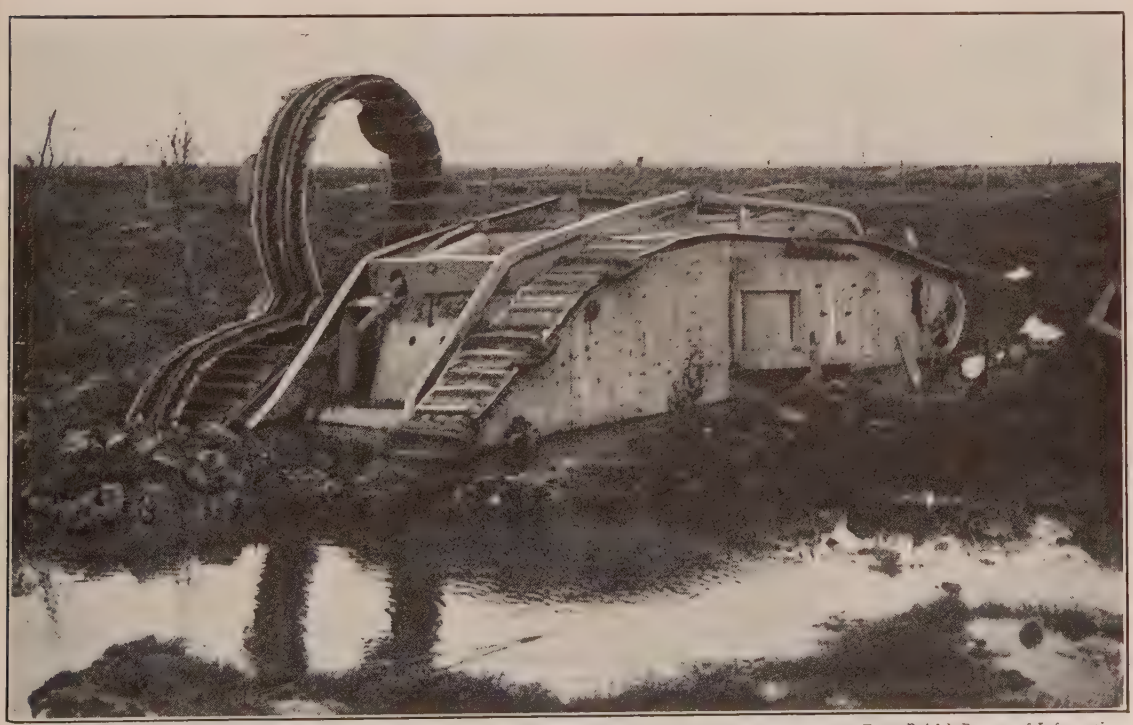
BRITISH TANK GOING INTO ACTION

"They are monstrously comical, like toads of a vast size emerging from the primeval slime in the twilight of the world's dawn."—*Philip Gibbs*



From British Bureau of Information

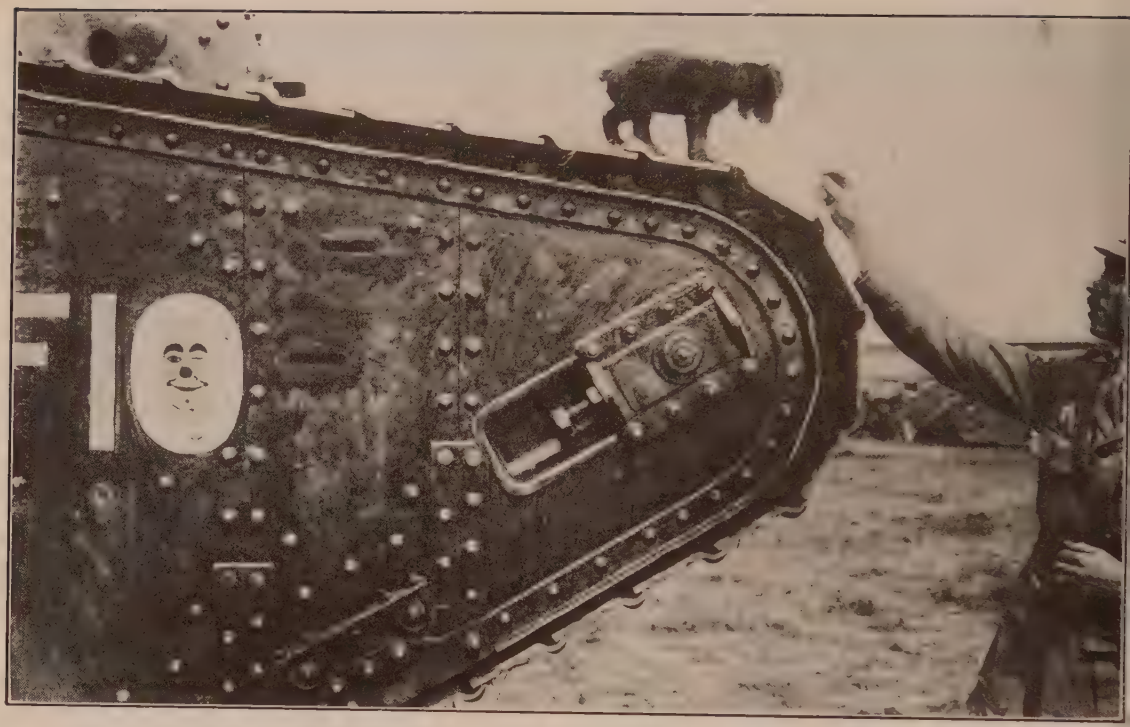
THERE ARE SOME DITCHES THAT EVEN A TANK CAN NOT NEGOTIATE



From British Bureau of Information

"THESE MONSTERS HAD STRANGE ADVENTURES"

The difficulties of a tank after heavy rains on the British front in Flanders



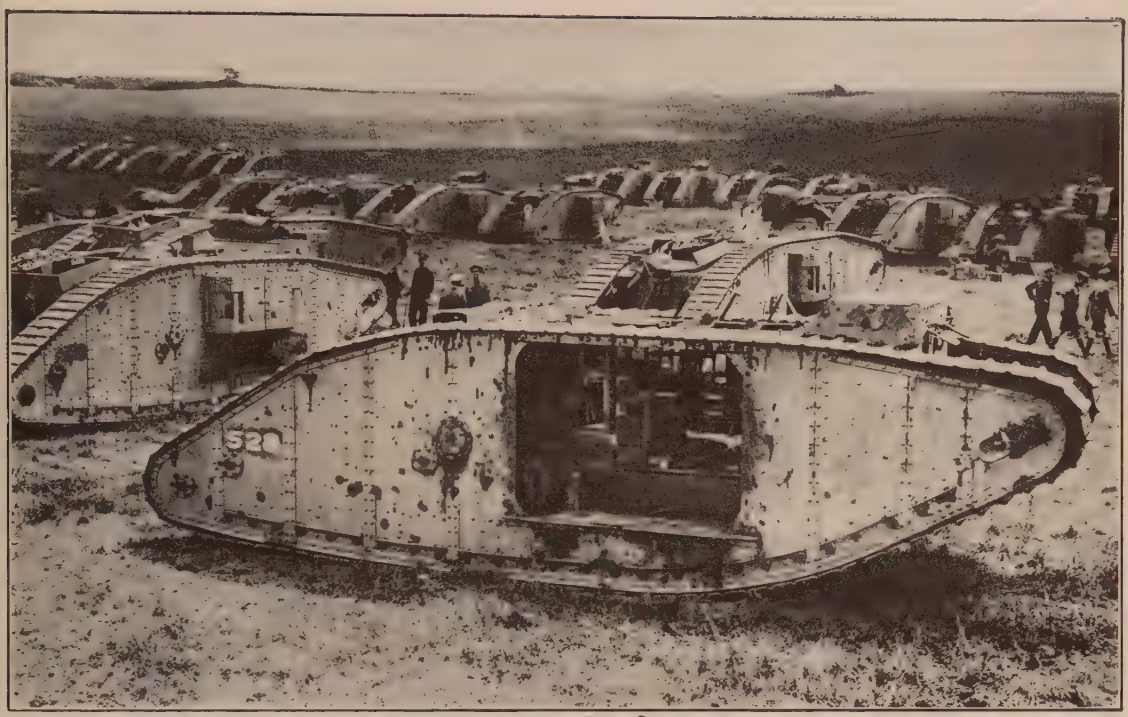
A TANK, ITS MASCOT AND HIS MASTER

From British Bureau of Information



From British Bureau of Information

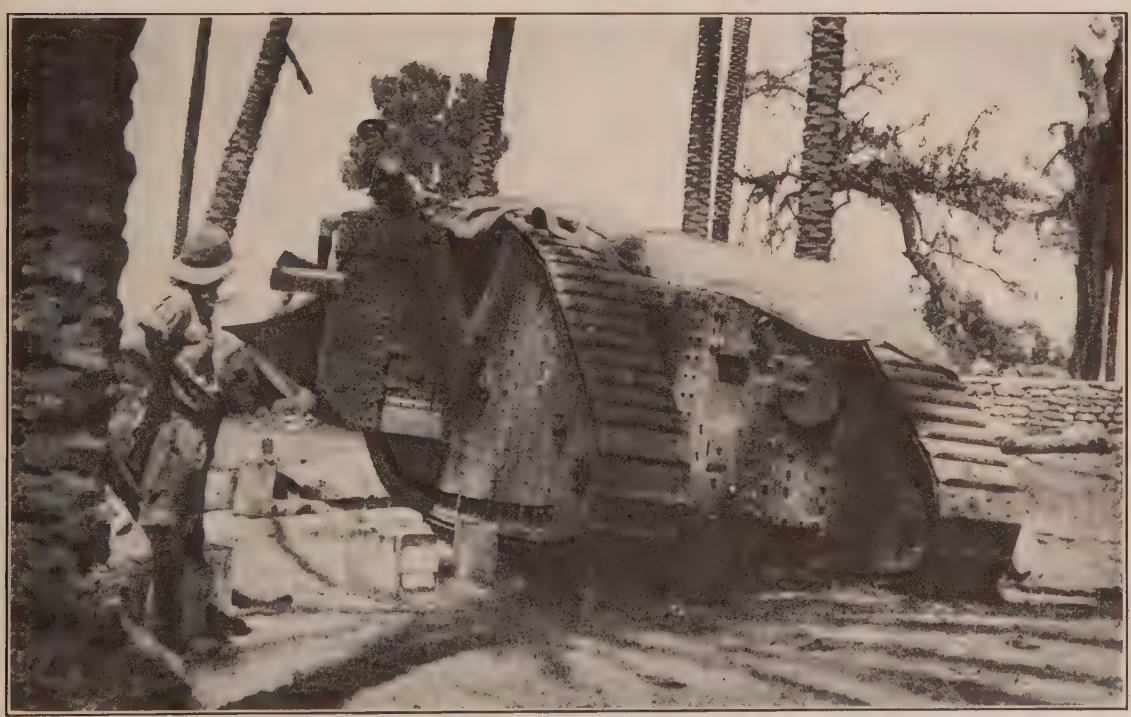
A DERELICT TANK USED AS THE ROOF OF A DUGOUT



From British Bureau of Information

SCENE AT A TANKDROME

This is where these strange modern monsters go home to rest



From British Bureau of Information

A MODERN SHIP OF THE DESERT

A tank among the palm trees, during the British campaign in the East



Courtesy British Bureau of Information

A TYPICAL BATTLEFIELD ON THE WESTERN FRONT

The tank in the distance is lumbering across this battlefield, covered with water-filled shell holes in which men are being drowned, as nonchalantly as if crossing a peaceful meadow on a summer's day

—he was then about seventy-four; his hair was only streaked with gray, and his face was almost unwrinkled; I should not have taken him for more than sixty-five. The austerity and brusqueness and ponderous dignity which are assumed by most highly placed Germans were not apparent. His voice was deep, musical, and pleasing, and his manners were altogether friendly and ingratiating. The only evidence of pomp in his bearing was his uniform; he was dressed as a field marshal, his body blazing with decorations and gold braid. Von der Goltz explained and half apologized for his regalia by saying that he just returned from an audience with the Sultan. He had come to Constantinople to present his majesty with a medal from the Kaiser, and was taking back to Berlin a similar mark of consideration from the Sultan to the Kaiser, besides an imperial present of 10,000 cigarettes.

The three of us sat there for some time, drinking coffee, eating German cakes, and smoking German cigars. I did not do much of the talking, but the conversation of Von der Goltz and Wangenheim seemed to me to shed much light upon the German mind, and especially on the trustworthiness of German military reports. The aspect of the Dardanelles fight that interested them most at that time was England's complete frankness in publishing her losses. That the British Government should issue an official statement, saying that three ships had been sunk and that four others had been badly damaged, struck them as most remarkable. In this announcement I merely saw a manifestation of the usual British desire to make public the worst—the policy which we Americans also believe to be the best in war times. But no such obvious explanation could satisfy these wise and solemn Teutons. No, England had some deep purpose in telling the truth so unblushingly; what could it be?

"*Es ist ausserordentlich!*" (It is extraordinary) said Von der Goltz, referring to England's public acknowledgment of defeat.

"*Es ist unerhört!*" (It is unheard of) declared the equally astonished Wangenheim.

These master diplomatists canvassed one explanation after another, and finally reached a conclusion that satisfied the higher strategy. England, they agreed, really had had no enthusiasm for this attack, because, in the event of success, she would have had to hand Constantinople over to Russia—something which England really did not intend to do. By publishing the losses, England showed Russia the enormous difficulties of the task; she had demonstrated, indeed, that the enterprise was impossible. After such losses, England intended Russia to understand that she had made a sincere attempt to gain this great prize of war and expected her not to insist on further sacrifices.

The sequel to this great episode in the war came in the winter of 1915–16. By this time Bulgaria had taken sides with the Entente, Serbia had been over-

whelmed, and the Germans had obtained a complete unobstructed railroad line from Constantinople to Austria and Germany. Huge Krupp guns now began to come over this line—all destined for the Dardanelles. Sixteen great batteries, of the latest model, were emplaced near the entrance, completely controlling Sedd-ul-Bahr. The Germans lent the Turks 500,000,000 marks, much of which was spent defending this indispensable highway. The thinly fortified Strait through which I passed in March, 1915, is now as impregnably fortified as Heligoland. It is doubtful whether all the fleets in the world could force the Dardanelles to-day.

VI

AMAZING DEEDS OF BRITISH "WILLIES" *

THE NEW ARMOURED MOTOR MONSTERS IN THEIR FIRST TEST

By PHILIP GIBBS

Another day of great remembrance has been given to England's history by British troops, September 15, 1916, that will not quickly pass out of the memory of the people, for on that day the British soldiers broke through the German third line of defence and went out into the open country and gave staggering blows to that German war machine which for two years, all but two months, seemed unthinkably strong.

It was a day of good success. Yesterday the British had the taste of victory and it was like a strong drug to their hearts, so that they laughed, even while blood was streaming down their faces, and they said: "By God, it's wonderful," when they came limping off the battlefields with wounds on fire and said: "We made 'em run like rabbits," when they lay on stretchers and could not move without a groan. And it was wonderful, indeed, for the day of victory came after two and a half months of continued and most bloody fighting. This new British army has not had an easy walk through after its time of preparation and training in the dirty ditches of the old trench warfare. Every yard of ground they had made since the dawn of July 1st was made by sheer, stubborn resolution to get forward, reckless of all cost in life or suffering. The first smash through of that great network of defences had been made by masses of men flinging themselves upon positions which the Germans had the right to believe impregnable, and the price was high.

The task set the British soldiers yesterday would have been formidable on the first day of the great offensive. Coming after two and a half months of the continuous fighting, it was startling in its boldness and showed that the generals had supreme confidence in the men, in their own powers of organization, and in the luck of battle that comes to whose who work for it. The Germans believed the offensive had petered out. There was much evidence for that. They did not believe it possible that an army of the size and strength of the British could carry on an attack at the same fierce pace. They cherished the hope that the British divisions were broken and spent, that the British stores of ammunition were giving out, that the men were overtired. They still had faith in their own gun power, a defensive strength of a thousand guns

*Courtesy New York *Times* Company.

against the British front and it was reasonable faith. They had been digging furiously on dark nights to strengthen the third line of defence, the famous Flers line which was, they thought, to be the boundary of the advancing British tide.

Yesterday I saw their prisoners coming off the battlefields in droves, and to-day hundreds of them in barbed wire cages behind the lines. They were dazed men, filled with gloom, tortured by a great bewilderment.

"It is your victory," said one of their officers, speaking to me in French. "It is our defeat; I cannot understand."

"Germany is kaput," said one of their non-commissioned officers. He meant that Germany is down, "in the soup," as the British soldiers would say. It was an exaggeration, for Germany still has a lot of fight left in her, but it was the belief of her captured soldiers yesterday.

GO INTO BATTLE CHEERING

The British were exalted, excited by the smell of victory, exaggerating their gains in the belief that the last great smash had been made, and that the end of this war was at hand. They went out at dawn yesterday filled with the spirit of victory. Many of them went over, too, in the greatest good humour, laughing as they ran, like children whose fancy had been inflamed by some new toy. They were cheered by a new weapon which was to be tried with them for the first time, the "heavily armoured motor machine guns of a new style" mentioned already in the official bulletin.

That description is a dull one compared with all the rich and rare qualities which belong to these extraordinary vehicles. The secret of them had been kept jealously for months. Only a few days ago it was whispered to me. "Like prehistoric monsters, you know, the ichthyosaurus," said the officer. I told him he was pulling my leg.

"But it's a fact, man." He breathed hard and laughed in a queer way at some enormous comicality. "They cut up houses and put the refuse under their bellies and walk right over 'em."

I knew this man was truthful, yet I could not believe him.

"They knock down trees like matchsticks," he said, staring at me with shining eyes. "They go clean through a wood."

"And anything else?" I asked, enjoying what I thought was a new sense of humour.

"Everything else," he said earnestly.

"They take ditches like kangaroos; they simply love shell craters, laugh at 'em."

It appeared also that they were proof against rifle bullets, machine gun bullets, bomb and shell splinters, just shrugged their shoulders and passed on. Nothing but a direct hit from a fair-sized shell could do them any harm.

CALLED "HUSH HUSH," BY SOME

"But what's the name of these mythical monsters?" I asked, not believing a word of it. He said "hush." Other people said "hush, hush" when the subject was alluded to in a remote way, and since then I heard that one name for them is the "hush, hush," but their great name is tanks.

For they are real and I have seen them, walked around them, got inside their bodies, looked at their mysterious organs and watched their monstrous movements. I came across a herd of them in a field, and like a countryman who first saw a giraffe said: "Hell, there ain't no such animal." Then I sat down on the grass and laughed until the tears came into my eyes (in war one has a funny sense of humour), for they are monstrously comical, like toads of vast size emerging from the primeval slime in the twilight of the world's dawn.

The skipper of them introduced me to them.

"I felt awfully bucked," said the young officer, who was about five feet high, "when my beauty ate up her first house, but I was sorry for the house, which was quite a good one."

"And how about the trees?" I asked.

"They simply love trees," he answered.

When the British soldiers first saw these strange creatures lolloping along the roads and over the old battlefields, taking trenches on the way, they shouted, cheered wildly, and laughed for a day afterward. Yesterday the troops got out of their trenches, laughing, shouting, cheering again, because the tanks had gone on ahead and were scaring the Germans dreadfully while they moved over their trenches and poured out fire on the German side. These motor monsters had strange adventures and did very good work, justifying their amazing existence.

For several days before the great blow was to be made and while there was heavy fighting in progress at most parts of the line, there was a steady forward movement and a concentration of all men and machinery to strike at the Flers line. The villages beyond the zone of fire where battalions had been resting suddenly became emptied.

The men had passed on higher up on the roads where there was a struggling tide of all the traffic of war, with supply columns, mule trains, guns, limbers, ambulances, and troops from all parts of the empire surging, swirling, struggling slowly forward through the narrow village streets, up long winding roads, across trampled and barren fields, through the ruins of villages destroyed a year or more ago, and out into the country of evil menace, which is criss-crossed by old trenches and pitted with shell craters and strewn with the refuse of the battle two months back in history. Here a great army, with all its material of war, incredibly vast and crowded, lay waiting for the hours when it should be hurled to the great hammer stroke.

ATTACK BEGINS AT DAYBREAK

They were masses of men who were the night before the battle hidden in the darkness of the earth, not revealed even by the white moonlight except in huddled crowds and camps.

Before 6 o'clock, summer time, all the guns were firing steadily and all the sky was very pale and shimmering in the first twilight of day, filled with the flashes of guns and shells. I went to the right of the line, hoping to see the infantry attack to the left of Leuze wood. Here one of the motor monsters was coming across the ground, but as the sun rose higher it drew the moisture out of all these shell craters and trenches and a dense white mist blotted out the ridge. For an hour or more the French troops who join the British line here came across country. The British soldiers were moving forward on the left silently, with the mist about them. Overhead shells went rushing by. It was the usual bombardment, not so heavy as others I watched.

It was not until two hours after the first attack, by which time the British troops were in Flers, that the artillery generals unmasked a number of new batteries, and there was an infernal pandemonium of noise, with every kind of gun and trench mortar flinging explosives over the lines which were now the German first line of defence.

AIRMEN HAVE A GREAT DAY

The machine-gun fire rapped out in fierce spasms and the German "archies" were throwing up shells which burst all about the planes of the British airmen, who came like a flock of birds over the battlefields, flying low above the mists. They did wonderful things yesterday, those British air pilots, risking their lives audaciously in single combats with hostile airmen in encounters against great odds, in bombing enemy headquarters, railway stations, kite balloons and troops, and registering or observing all day long for the artillery.

They were out to destroy the Germans' last means of observations, and they began the success of the battle by gaining absolute mastery of the air. Thirteen German aëroplanes, since reported by General Haig to be fifteen, were brought down and their flying men dared not come across the British lines to risk more losses.

It is impossible at this stage to give a detailed narrative of the great battle along the whole front of attack. It is still in progress and there are many troops engaged. It is only possible to give a general outline of the action and a few glimpses of separate adventures.

On the British side there was nothing of the killing character within their reach and knowledge which they did not use, and they turned the Germans' worst weapons against themselves.

Every material of war made by the home workers in British factories by

months of toil was called in. Men went in with a resolve to break through the German third line without counting the cost, to smash down any opposition they might meet, and to go forward and far until they could get the Germans on the run.

A body of Scots went out to the battle lines to the tune of "Stop Your Tickling, Jock," but there was grim meaning to the music. It is no love song. The English soldiers had been practising bayonet exercise harder than usual, and, with a personal interest beyond the discipline, the men fought yesterday fiercely and ruthlessly. They want to get onto the heels of the Germans, and there were moments yesterday when they saw many pairs of heels.

HARD FIGHTING AT COURCELETTE

The area of the British attack yesterday extended on the left from the ground north of Pozières to the line recently won to the north of Ginchy on the right, and its purpose was to break through the third German line below Courcelette, Martinpuich, and Les Bœufs, a distance of about six miles.

On the left, in front of Courcelette, there was hard and unexpected fighting. As is now known, the Germans had prepared for an attack, and had massed troops in considerable force in the front and reserve lines. They sent out advanced patrols and bombing parties while the British were waiting to go over, and immediately there was a fierce encounter. The Germans came over in a rush. Many fell before the British rifle fire, but others managed to jump into portions of a trench and bombed their way up. Several of the machine guns were turned on them, and there were not many left alive.

But before the fight ended a new one began for the British jumping-off time had come, and the assaulting troops rose as one man, taking no notice of what had happened, and swept across their own trenches, and the Germans, who were in them, and went straight across country toward Courcelette.

They came up immediately against difficult ground and fierce machine-gun fire. Southeast of Courcelette—beyond the shell craters and bits of a broken trench, which the men had carried easily enough, sweeping the Germans down before them—stood the ruins of a sugar factory which the Germans had made into a redoubt with machine-gun emplacements. It was one of those deadly places which had cost so many lives among the British in other parts of the battle ground, but they had a new engine of war to destroy the place.

Over the British trenches in the twilight of dawn one of those motor monsters lurched up and now came crawling forward to the rescue, cheered by the assaulting troops, who called out words of encouragement to it and laughed so that some men were laughing even when the bullets caught them in their throat. "Crême de Menthe" was the name of this particular creature, and it waddled forward right over the old German trenches, went forward very stead-

ily toward the sugar factory. There was a silence from the Germans there, then suddenly their machine-gun fire burst out in nervous spasms and splashed against the side of "Crême de Menthe," but the tank did not mind. The bullets fell from its sides harmlessly.

WALKED THROUGH SUGAR FACTORY

It advanced upon a broken wall, leaned up against it heavily until it fell with a crash of bricks, and then rose on to the bricks and passed over them and walked straight into the midst of the factory ruins. From its sides came flashes of fire and a hose of bullets, and then it trampled around over the machine-gun emplacement, "having a grand time," as one of the men said with enthusiasm. It crushed the machine guns under its heavy ribs and killed the machine-gun teams with its deadly fire. The infantry followed in and took the place after this good help, and then advanced again around the flanks of the monster.

In spite of the tank, which did such grand work, the assault on Courcelette was hard and costly. Again and again the men came under machine-gun fire and rifle fire, for the Germans had dug new trenches called "*fabeckgraben*" and "*zollerngraben*," which had not been wiped out by the artillery. They fought with great courage and desperation. Seventy men who advanced the first on part of these lines were swept down, seventy others who were sent forward to fill their places fell also, but their comrades were not disheartened, and at last carried the position in a great wave of assault.

Then they went on to the village. It was like all these villages in German hands, tunnelled with a nest of dugouts and strongholds hard to take. The British troops entered it from the eastern side, fought yard by yard, stubbornly resolved to have it. A tank came along and plowed about, searching for German machine guns, thrusting over bits of wall, nosing here and there and sitting on heaps of ruin while it fired down the streets. By 6:30 last evening the village was taken. The British took 400 prisoners, and when they were brought down to Pozières last night they passed old "Crême de Menthe," who was going home. They held up their hands, crying "*Gott in Himmel*," and asked how they could fight against such monstrous things. The taking of Courcelette was a great achievement, skilfully planned and carried out by splendid men and one monster.

ATTACK UPON MARTINPUICH

On the right of these troops there was a great assault upon Martinpuich and High Wood. Here also in High Wood the Germans had been ready for attack, and, being forestalled in that, they made a strong counter-attack, which for a time had some success, driving the British back to the southern edge of the wood. The British troops had been heavily shelled beforehand,

and they found the Germans in much stronger force than they had expected in that wood of bitter memory, but the British fought very gamely, some among them utterly without experience of the Somme kind of fighting, and they wilted a little before its ferocity of fire.

But the older men, veterans of a year's service or more, cheered them up, kept them steady, and led them. They counter-attacked and regained their old line, and then, to their great joy, saw the tanks advancing through High Wood and on each side of it.

"It was like a fairy tale," said a Cockney boy. "I can't help laughing every time I think of it." He laughed then, although he had a broken arm and was covered with blood.

"They broke down trees as if they were matchsticks and were over the barricades like elephants. The Boches were thoroughly scared.

"They came running out of their shell holes and trenches shouting like mad. Some of them attacked the tanks and tried to bomb them, but it wasn't a bit of good. Oh, crikey! it was a rare treat to see the biggest joke that ever was. They just stamped down the German dugouts as one might a wasps' nest."

LITTLE SHELTER FOR ATTACKERS

On the left of High Wood was a very fine body of troops who had no trenches to lie in, but they just lay out in shell craters under the constant fire of the whizz bangs, that is to say the field guns, firing at short range, which was extremely hard to endure.

"It was cruel," said one of these men, "but we went forward all right when the time came, over the bodies of our comrades, who were lying in pools of blood, and afterward the Germans had to pay."

They were coöperating with some troops on their left who went straight for Martinpuich. These men went across No Man's Land for nearly 1,000 yards in six minutes' racing. They made short work of the Germans, who tried to snipe them from shell craters, and they only came to a check on the outskirts of Martinpuich, where they were received with a blast of machine-gun fire.

"HUNGRY" MONSTERS BROUGHT UP

It was then the turn of the tanks. Before dawn two of them had come up out of the darkness and lumbered over the British front-line trenches, looking toward the Germans as though hungry for breakfast. Afterward they came across No Man's Land like enormous toads with pains in their stomachs and nosed at Martinpuich before testing the strength of its broken barns and bricks. The men cheered them wildly, waving their helmets and dancing around them. One company needed cheering up for they had lost two of their officers the

night before in a patrol adventure, and it was the sergeants who led them over, but now, when they saw the ichthyosauri, they shouted with the others and laughed loudly.

Twenty minutes afterward the first waves were inside the first trenches at Martinpuich and in advance of them waddled a monster. The men were held up for some time by the machine guns, but the monsters went on alone and had astounding adventures. They went straight through the shells of broken barns and houses, straddled on top of German dugouts, and fired enfilading shots down the German trenches. From one dugout came a German colonel with a white, frightened face, who held his hands very high in front of the tank, shouting "*Kamerad, Kamerad.*"

"Well, come inside then," said a voice in the body of the beast and a human hand came forth from a hole opening suddenly, and grabbed the German officer.

For the rest of the day the tank led that unfortunate man about on the strangest journey the world has ever seen.

Another tank was confronted with 100 Germans, who shouted "Mercy! Mercy!" and at the head of this procession led them back as prisoners to the British lines. Yet another tank went off to the right of Martinpuich and was so fresh and high-spirited that it went far into German lines as if on the way to Berlin.

MARTINPUICH IN BRITISH HANDS

The men were not so fortunate as the monsters, not being proof against machine-gun bullets and shell fire. The Germans concentrated a very heavy fire upon them and many fell. It was late in the evening before the whole of Martinpuich was taken after fierce fighting, and it was the crowning triumph of a successful day.

The troops on the left side of the line did well. They took forty German officers and 1,430 of other ranks. Against them was the Second Bavarian Corps, whom many of the British met before at Kemmel and the Hohenzollern redoubt, and Ypres, and were glad to pay off the old scores against them.

On the right of the troops at Martinpuich the attack was swinging up to Flers, across a wide stretch of difficult and perilous ground, strongly defended. The Germans were flinging over storms of shrapnel and high explosives, and many British fell, but the wounded shouted on the others if they were not too badly hit, and the others went forward grimly and steadily. These soldiers were superb in courage and stoic endurance, and pressed forward steadily in the broken waves.

The first news of success came through from an airman's wireless, which said:

"A tank is walking up the High street of Flers with the British army cheering behind."

It was an actual fact. One of the motor monsters was there enjoying itself thoroughly and keeping down the heads of the Germans. It hung out a big piece of paper, on which were the words. "Great Hun Defeat, Special." An aëroplane flew low over the monster machine, gunning the scared Germans, who fled before this monstrous apparition.

Later in the day it seemed to have been in need of rest before coming home, and two humans got out of its inside and walked back to the British lines, but by that time Flers and many prisoners were in the hands of the British, and the troops had gone beyond to further fields.

On the extreme right of the line of attack the fighting was hardest and fiercest of all, and is still very confused and uncertain to the north of Ginchy and in the direction of Gueudecourt. In this direction the Germans fought from the direction of Morval and Combles, and the shell fire was frightful in its violence. Nevertheless, the first rush forward was magnificent on the part of the troops. The Germans resisted stoutly along their first line. They kept up a severe rifle fire and machine-gun fire until the British were right on them, and then they fought bayonet to bayonet. Large numbers of them were killed, and the British swept through to the second line of trenches and took that.

TROOPS GO AS FAR AS GUEUDECOURT

A third wave passed through them to the third German trench, but before they reached this goal the German soldiers came out with their hands up and surrendered. The British went on and on. They went too far, these soldiers in their eagerness. One of the colonels stood up on a hillock, blowing a hunting horn to fetch them back, but they did not hear and went on still further, unprotected by the troops on their right. The officers waved on their men with revolvers and many fell leading their companies. It was one of the greatest charges in history, but it drove out too far into the "blue" without sufficient coöperation with the troops, held up lower down by strong points and machine guns. What the situation is there to-night I do not yet know except that these men are fighting on the outskirts of Gueudecourt.

It was the hardest blow to-day that had been struck at Germany's heart and pride by British troops.

VII

THE DEATH OF EDITH CAVELL*

By HUGH GIBSON

On August 5, 1915, Miss Edith Cavell, an Englishwoman, directress of a large nursing home at Brussels, was quietly arrested by the German authorities and confined in the prison of St. Gilles on the charge that she had aided stragglers from the Allied armies to escape across the frontier from Belgium to Holland, furnishing them with money, clothing, and information concerning the route to be followed. It was some time before news of Miss Cavell's arrest was received by the American Legation, which was entrusted at that time with the protection of British interests in the occupied portion of Belgium. When the Minister at Brussels received a communication from the Ambassador at London transmitting a note from the Foreign Office stating that Miss Cavell was reported to have been arrested and asking that steps be taken to render her assistance, Mr. Whitlock immediately addressed a note to the German authorities asking whether there was any truth in the report of Miss Cavell's arrest and requesting authorization for Maître Gaston de Leval the legal counselor of the Legation, to consult with Miss Cavell and, if desirable, entrust some one with her defence.

No reply was received to this communication, and on September 10th the Legation addressed a further note to Baron von der Lancken, Chief of the Political Department, calling his attention to the matter and asking that he enable the Legation to take such steps as might be necessary for Miss Cavell's defence.

On September 12th a reply was received from Baron von der Lancken in which it was stated that Miss Cavell had been arrested on August 5th and was still in the military prison of St. Gilles. The note continued:

> She has herself admitted that she concealed in her house French and English soldiers, as well as Belgians of military age, all desirous of proceeding to the front. She has also admitted having furnished these soldiers with the money necessary for their journey to France, and having facilitated their departure from Belgium by providing them with guides, who enabled them to cross the Dutch frontier secretly.
>
> Miss Cavell's defence is in the hands of the advocate Braun, who, I may add is already in touch with the competent German authorities.
>
> In view of the fact that the Department of the Governor General as a matter of principle does not allow accused persons to have any interviews whatever, I much regret my inability to procure for M. de Leval permission to visit Miss Cavell as long as she is in solitary confinement.

*From "A Journal From Our Legation in Belgium," by Hugh Gibson, Copyright, Doubleday, Page & Co.

Under the provisions of international law the American Minister could take no action while the case was before the courts. It is an elementary rule that the forms of a trial must be gone through without interference from any source. If, when the sentence has been rendered, it appears that there has been a denial of justice, the case may be taken up diplomatically with a view to securing real justice. Thus in the early stages of the case the American Minister was helpless to interfere. All that he could do while the case was before the courts was to watch the procedure carefully and be prepared with a full knowledge of the facts to see that a fair trial was granted.

Maître de Leval communicated with M. Braun, who said that he had been prevented from pleading before the Court on behalf of Miss Cavell, but had asked his friend and colleague, M. Kirschen, to take up the case. Maître de Leval then communicated with M. Kirschen, and learned from him that lawyers defending prisoners before German military courts were not allowed to see their clients before the trial and were shown none of the documents of the prosecution. It was thus manifestly impossible to prepare any defence save in the presence of the Court and during the progress of the trial. Maître de Leval, who from the beginning to the end of the case showed a most serious and chivalrous concern for the welfare of the accused, then told M. Kirschen that he would endeavour to be present at the trial in order to watch the case. M. Kirschen dissuaded him from attending the trial on the ground that it would only serve to harm Miss Cavell rather than help her; that the judges would resent the presence of a representative of the American Legation. Although it seems unbelievable that any man of judicial mind would resent the presence of another bent solely on watching the course of justice, M. Kirschen's advice was confirmed by other Belgian lawyers who had defended prisoners before the German military courts and spoke with the authority of experience. M. Kirschen promised, however, to keep Maître de Leval fully posted as to all the developments of the case and the facts brought out in the course of the trial.

The trial began on Thursday, October 7th, and ended the following day.

On Sunday afternoon the Legation learned from persons who had been present at the trial some of the facts.

THE CASE AGAINST MISS CAVELL

It seems that Miss Cavell was prosecuted for having helped English and French soldiers, as well as Belgian young men, to cross the frontier into Holland in order that they might get over to England. She had made a signed statement admitting the truth of these charges and had further made public acknowledgment in court. She frankly admitted that not only had she helped the soldiers to cross the frontier, but that some of them had written her from England thanking her for her assistance. This last admission made the

case more serious for her because if it had been proven only that she had helped men to cross the frontier into Holland she could have been sentenced only for a violation of the passport regulations, and not for the "crime" of assisting soldiers to reach a country at war with Germany.

Miss Cavell was tried under Paragraph 58 of the German Military Code, which says:

> Any person who, with the intention of aiding the hostile Power or causing harm to German or allied troops, is guilty of one of the crimes of Paragraph 90 of the German Penal Code, will be sentenced to death for treason.

The "crime" referred to by Paragraph 90 was that of "conducting soldiers to the enemy" (viz: *dem feinde Mannschaften zuführt.*)

It is manifest that this was a strained reading of the provisions of military law; that a false interpretation was wilfully put upon these provisions in order to secure a conviction. This law was obviously framed to cover the case of those who assist stragglers or lost soldiers to get back to their own lines and join their units. It is doubtful whether framers of the military law had foreseen anything so indirect and unprecedented as that of helping soldiers cross into a neutral country in the hope that they might find their way back through two other countries to their own army. Miss Cavell assisted these soldiers to escape into a neutral country which was bound, if possible, to apprehend and intern them. If these soldiers succeeded in outwitting the Dutch authorities and making their way to England, their success would not, to any fair-minded person, increase the offence committed by Miss Cavell.

HER COURAGE IN COURT

Miss Cavell's conduct before the Court was marked by the greatest frankness and courage. She stated that she had assisted these men to escape into Holland because she thought that if she had not done so they would have been seized and shot by the Germans; that she felt that she had only done her duty in helping to save their lives.

The Public Prosecutor replied that while this argument might be made concerning English soldiers, it could not apply to Belgians, who were free to remain in the country without danger. (The subsequent behaviour of the German authorities to the Belgian young men who remained in the country does not lend any considerable weight to the remarks of the Public Prosecutor.)

In concluding his pleas, the Public Prosecutor asked that the Court pass the sentence of death upon Miss Cavell and eight other prisoners among the thirty-five brought to trial.

Upon ascertaining these facts Maître de Leval called at the Political Department and asked that, the trial having taken place, permission be granted

him to see Miss Cavell in person, as there could be no further objection to consultation. Herr Conrad, an official of the Political Department, who received Maître de Leval, stated that he would make enquiry of the Court and communicate with him later.

The foregoing are the developments up to Sunday night, October 10th. Subsequent developments are shown by the following extracts from a journal made at the time:

Brussels, October 12, 1915.—When I came in yesterday morning I found information which seemed to confirm previous reports that Miss Cavell's trial had been concluded on Saturday afternoon and that the prosecution had asked that the death sentence be imposed. Monsieur de Leval promptly called the Political Department over the telephone and talked to Conrad, repeating our previous requests that he be authorized to see Miss Cavell in prison. He also asked that Mr. Gahan, the English chaplain, be permitted to visit her. Conrad replied that it had been decided that Mr. Gahan could not see her, but that she could see any of the three Protestant clergymen (Germans) attached to the prison; that De Leval could not see her until the judgment was pronounced and signed. He said that as yet no sentence had been pronounced and that there would probably be a delay of a day or two before a decision was reached. He stated that even if the judgment of the Court had been given it would have no effect until it had been confirmed by the Governor, who was absent from Brussels and would not return for two or possibly three days. We asked Conrad to inform the Legation immediately upon the confirmation of the sentence in order that steps might be taken to secure a pardon if the judgment really proved to be one of capital punishment. Conrad said he had no information to the effect that the Court had acceded to the request for the death sentence, but promised to keep us informed. I stood by the telephone and could overhear both De Leval and Conrad.

Despite the promise of the German authorities to keep us fully posted, we were nervous and apprehensive and remained at the Legation all day, making repeated enquiry by telephone to learn whether a decision had been reached. On each of these occasions the Political Department renewed the assurance that we would be informed as soon as there was any news. In order to be prepared for every eventuality, we drew up a petition for clemency addressed to the Governor General, and a covering note addressed to Baron Von der Lancken, in order that they might be presented without loss of time in case of urgent need.

A number of people had been arrested and tried for helping men to cross into Holland, but, so far as we know, the death sentence had never been inflicted. The usual thing was to give a sentence of imprisonment in Germany. The officials at the Political Department professed to be skeptical as to the re-

ported intention of the Court to inflict the death sentence, and led us to think that nothing of the sort need be apprehended.

None the less we were haunted by a feeling of impending horror that we could not shake off. I had planned to ride in the afternoon, but when my horse was brought around I had it sent away and stayed near the telephone. Late in the afternoon De Leval succeeded in getting into communication with a lawyer interested in one of the accused. He said that the German *Kommandant* had informed him that judgment would be passed the next morning, Tuesday. He was worried as to what was in store for the prisoners and said he feared the Court would be very severe.

At 6:20 I had Topping (clerk of the Legation) telephone Conrad again. Once more we had the most definite assurances that nothing had happened and a somewhat weary renewal of the promise that we should have immediate information when sentence was pronounced. (This was just one hour and twenty minutes after the sentence had been pronounced. There is no need for comment.)

At 8:30 I had just gone home when De Leval came for me in my car, saying he had come to report that Miss Cavell was to be shot during the night. We could hardly credit this, but as our informant was so positive and insisted so earnestly we set off to see what could be done.

De Leval had seen the Minister, who was ill in bed, and brought me his instructions to find Von der Lancken, present the appeal for clemency, and press for a favourable decision. In order to add weight to our representations I was to seek out the Spanish Minister to get him to go with us and join in our appeal. I found him dining at Baron Lambert's, and he willingly agreed to come.

HOW LANCKEN SPENT THE EVENING

When we got to the Political Department we found that Baron Von der Lancken and all the members of his staff had gone out to spend the evening at one of the disreputable little theatres that have sprung up here for the entertainment of the Germans. At first we were unable to find where he had gone, as the orderly on duty evidently had orders not to tell, but by dint of some blustering and impressing on him the fact that Lancken would have cause to regret not having seen us, he agreed to have him notified. We put the orderly into the motor and sent him off. The Marquis de Villalobar, De Leval, and I settled down to wait, and we waited long, for Lancken, evidently knowing the purpose of our visit, declined to budge until the end of an act that seemed to appeal to him.

He came in about 10:50, followed shortly by Count Harrach and Baron Von Falkenhausen, members of his staff. I briefly explained to him the situation as we understood it and presented the note from the Minister transmitting

the appeal for clemency. Lancken read the note aloud in our presence, showing no feeling aside from cynical annoyance at something—probably our having discovered the intentions of the German authorities.

When he had finished reading the note Lancken said that he knew nothing of the case, but was sure in any event that no sentence would be executed so soon as we had said. He manifested some surprise, not to say annoyance, that we should give credence to any report in regard to the case which did not come from his department, that being the only official channel. De Leval and I insisted, however, that we had reason to believe our reports were correct and urged him to make inquiries. He then tried to find out the exact source of our information, and became insistent. I did not propose, however, to enlighten him on this point and said that I did not feel at liberty to divulge our source of information.

Lancken then became persuasive—said that it was most improbable that any sentence had been pronounced; that even if it had, it could not be put into effect within so short a time, and that in any event all Government offices were closed and that it was impossible for him to take any action before morning. He suggested that we all go home "reasonably," sleep quietly, and come back in the morning to talk about the case. It was very clear that if the facts were as we believed them to be, the next morning would be too late, and we pressed for immediate inquiry. I had to be rather insistent on this point, and De Leval, in his anxiety, became so emphatic that I feared he might bring down the wrath of the Germans on his own head and tried to quiet him. There was something splendid about the way De Leval, a Belgian with nothing to gain and everything to lose, stood up for what he believed to be right and chivalrous, regardless of consequences to himself.

Finally, Lancken agreed to enquire as to the facts, telephoned from his office to the presiding judge of the court martial, and returned in a short time to say that sentence had indeed been passed and that Miss Cavell was to be shot during the night.

THE PLEA FOR CLEMENCY

We then presented with all the earnestness at our command the plea for clemency. We pointed out to Lancken that Miss Cavell's offences were a matter of the past; that she had been in prison for some weeks, thus effectually ending her power for harm; that there was nothing to be gained by shooting her, and on the contrary this would do Germany much more harm than good and England much more good than harm. We pointed out to him that the whole case was a very bad one from Germany's point of view; that the sentence of death had heretofore been imposed only for cases of espionage and that Miss Cavell was not even accused by the German authorities of anything so serious. At the time there was no intimation that Miss Cavell was guilty of espionage.

It was only when public opinion had been aroused by her execution that the German Government began to refer to her as "the spy Cavell." According to the German statement of the case there is no possible ground for calling her a spy. We reminded him that Miss Cavell as directress of a large nursing home had, since the beginning of the war, cared for large numbers of German soldiers in a way that should make her life sacred to them. I further called his attention to the manifest failure of the Political Department to comply with its repeated promises to keep us informed as to the progress of the trial and the passing of the sentence. The deliberate policy of subterfuge and prevarication by which they had sought to deceive us as to the progress of the case was so raw as to require little comment. We all pointed out to Lancken the horror of shooting a woman, no matter what her offence, and endeavoured to impress upon him the frightful effect that such an execution would have throughout the civilized world. With a sneer he replied that, on the contrary, he was confident that the effect would be excellent.

When everything else had failed we asked Lancken to look at the case from the point of view solely of German interests, assuring him that the execution of Miss Cavell would do Germany infinite harm. We reminded him of the burning of Louvain and the sinking of the *Lusitania*, and told him that this murder would rank with those two affairs and would stir all civilized countries with horror and disgust. Count Harrach broke in at this with the rather irrelevant remark that he would rather see Miss Cavell shot than have harm come to the humblest German soldier, and his only regret was that they had not "three or four old English women to shoot."

APPEALS TO THE KAISER REFUSED

The Spanish Minister and I tried to prevail upon Lancken to call Great Headquarters at Charleville on the telephone and have the case laid before the Emperor for his decision. Lancken stiffened perceptibly at this suggestion and refused, frankly—saying that he could not do anything of the sort. Turning to Villalobar, he said, "I can't do that sort of thing. I am not a friend of my sovereign as you are of yours," to which a rejoinder was made that in order to be a good friend one must be loyal and ready to incur displeasure in case of need. However, our arguments along this line came to nothing, but Lancken finally came to the point of saying that the Military Governor of Brussels was the supreme authority (*Gerichtsherr*) in matters of this sort and that even the Governor General had no power to intervene. After further argument he agreed to get General Von Sauberschweig, the Military Governor, out of bed to learn whether he had already ratified the sentence and whether there was any chance for clemency.

Lancken was gone about half an hour, during which time the three of us laboured with Harrach and Falkenhausen, without, I am sorry to say, the

slightest success. When Lancken returned he reported that the Military Governor said that he had acted in this case only after mature deliberation; that the circumstances of Miss Cavell's offence were of such character that he considered infliction of the death penalty imperative. Lancken further explained that under the provisions of German Military Law the Gerichtsherr had discretionary power to accept or to refuse to accept an appeal for clemency; that in this case the Governor regretted that he must decline to accept the appeal for clemency or any representiatons in regard to the matter.

We then brought up again the question of having the Emperor called on the telephone, but Lancken replied very definitely that the matter had gone too far; that the sentence had been ratified by the Military Governor, and that when matters had gone that far "even the Emperor himself could not intervene." (Although accepted at the time as true, this statement was later found to be entirely false and is understood to have displeased the Emperor, who could have stopped the execution at any moment.)

He then asked me to take back the letter I had presented to him. I at first demurred, pointing out that this was not an appeal for clemency, but merely a letter to him transmitting a note to the Governor which was itself to be considered the appeal for clemency. I pointed out that this was especially stated in the Minister's letter to him, and tried to prevail upon him to keep it. He was very insistent, however, and inasmuch as he had already read the note aloud to us and we knew that he was aware of its contents, it seemed that there was nothing to be gained by refusing to accept it, and I accordingly took it back.

THE LAST HOPELESS PLEA

Despite Lancken's very positive statements as to the futility of our errand, we continued to appeal to every sentiment to secure delay and time for reconsideration of the case. The Spanish Minister led Lancken aside and said some things to him that he would have hesitated to say in the presence of Harrach, Falkenhausen, and De Leval, a Belgian subject. Lancken squirmed and blustered by turns, but stuck to his refusal. In the meantime, I went after Harrach and Falkenhausen again. This time, throwing modesty to the winds, I reminded them of some of the things we had done for German interests at the outbreak of the war; how we had repatriated thousands of German subjects and cared for their interests; how during the siege of Antwerp I had repeatedly crossed the lines during actual fighting at the request of Field Marshal Von der Goltz to look after German interests; how all this service had been rendered gladly and without thought of reward; that since the beginning of the war we had never asked a favour of the German authorities and it seemed incredible that they should now decline to grant us even a day's delay to discuss the case of a poor woman who was, by her imprisonment, prevented from doing further

harm, and whose execution in the middle of the night at the conclusion of a course of trickery and deception was nothing short of an affront to civilization. Even when I was ready to abandon all hope, De Leval was unable to believe that the German authorities would persist in their decision, and appealed most touchingly and feelingly to the sense of pity for which we looked in vain.

Our efforts were perfectly useless, however, as the three men with whom we had to deal were so completely callous and indifferent that they were in no way moved by anything that we could say.

We did not stop until after midnight, when it was only too clear that there was no hope.

It was a bitter business leaving the place feeling that we had failed and that the little woman was to be led out before a firing squad within a few hours. But it was worse to go back to the Legation to the little group of English women who were waiting in my office to learn the result of our visit. They had been there for nearly four hours while Mrs. Whitlock and Miss Larner sat with them and tried to sustain them through the hours of waiting. There were Mrs. Gahan, wife of the English chaplain, Miss B——, and several nurses from Miss Cavell's school. One was a little wisp of a thing who had been mothered by Miss Cavell, and was nearly beside herself with grief. There was no way of breaking the news to them gently, for they could read the answer in our faces when we came in. All we could do was to give them each a stiff drink of sherry and send them home. De Leval was white as death, and I took him back to his house. I had a splitting headache myself and could not face the idea of going to bed. I went home and read for awhile, but that was no good, so I went out and walked the streets, much to the annoyance of German patrols. I rang the bells of several houses in a desperate desire to talk to somebody, but could not find a soul—only sleepy and disgruntled servants. It was a night I should not like to go through again, but it wore through somehow and I braced up with a cold bath and went to the Legation for the day's work.

MISS CAVELL'S BRAVE DEATH

The day brought forth another loathsome fact in connection with the case. It seems the sentence on Miss Cavell was not pronounced in open court. Her executioners, apparently in the hope of concealing their intentions from us, went into her cell and there, behind locked doors, pronounced sentence upon her. It is all of a piece with the other things they have done.

Last night Mr. Gahan got a pass and was admitted to see Miss Cavell shortly before she was taken out and shot. He said she was calm and prepared and faced the ordeal without a tremor. She was a tiny thing that looked as though she could be blown away with a breath, but she had a great spirit. She told Mr. Gahan that soldiers had come to her and asked to be helped to

the frontier; that knowing the risks they ran and the risks she took she had helped them. She said she had nothing to regret, no complaint to make, and that if she had it all to do over again she would change nothing.

They partook together of the Holy Communion, and she who had so little need of preparation was prepared for death. She was free from resentment and said: "I realize that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness toward any one."

She was taken out and shot before daybreak.

She was denied the support of her own clergyman at the end, but a German military chaplain stayed with her and gave her burial within the precincts of the prison. He did not conceal his admiration and said: "She was courageous to the end. She professed her Christian faith and said that she was glad to die for her country. She died like a heroine."

VIII

THE FIRST GERMAN GAS ATTACK AND THE NEW GAS WARFARE*

By MAJOR S. J. M. AULD

[Of the British Military Mission to the United States]

In the early part of April, 1915, we were in trenches opposite Messines. We enjoyed the usual morning and evening "hate"; we sniped and were sniped at; we patrolled and wired and attempted to drain away the superfluous water, and there was much mud and humour and expectancy. It is true there were no Mills grenades or Stokes mortars or tin hats, but trench warfare was not so very different then from what it is now—with one great exception: there was no gas. And there were consequently no respirators to carry day and night. It is almost impossible now to remember the time when one did not carry a respirator in the trenches. Somehow it makes you feel quite naked to think of it—and yet there we were, imagining we knew what war really was like!

The newspapers we got at that time were generally a good many days old, and censored at that, and our chief source of news about the war in other people's parts of the line was a summary of so-called information issued from headquarters, which percolated down to the battalion and, like every other summary before and since, went by the name of "Comic Cuts."

Somewhere about the middle of the month we heard that in somebody else's summary had appeared a paragraph to the effect that a deserter from the German lines up in the salient had told a cock-and-bull story of how they intended to poison us all with a cloud of gas, and that tanks full of the poison gas were already installed in their trenches.

THE FIRST APPEARANCE

Of course nobody believed him. The statement was "passed for information for what it is worth." And as nobody ever believed anything that appeared in Comic Cuts in any case, we were not disposed to get the wind up about it. And then, about a week later, on April 22, 1915, was launched the first gas attack; and another constant horror was added to an already somewhat unpleasant war. Details about the attack are still somewhat meagre,

*Courtesy *Saturday Evening Post, World's Work* and George H. Doran Company as publishers of "Gas and Flame."

for the simple reason that the men who could have told much about it never came back.

The place chosen for the first gas attack was in the northeast part of the Ypres salient at that part of the line where the French and British lines met, running down from where the trenches left the canal near Boesinghe. On the French right was the — Regiment of Turcos, and on the British left were the Canadians.

Try to imagine the feelings and the condition of the coloured troops as they saw the vast cloud of greenish-yellow gas spring out of the ground and slowly move down wind toward them, the vapor clinging to the earth, seeking out every hole and hollow and filling the trenches and shell holes as it came. First wonder, then fear; then, as the first fringes of the cloud enveloped them and left them choking and agonized in the fight for breath—panic. Those who could move broke and ran, trying, generally in vain, to outstrip the cloud which followed inexorably after them.

The majority of those in the front line were killed—some, let us hope, immediately, but most of them slowly and horribly. It is not my intention to try to play upon feelings, but those of us who have seen men badly gassed can only think with horror of a battlefield covered with such cases, over which the Germans subsequently advanced.

The Canadians on the British left fared both better and worse than the French coloured troops. Only their left appears to have been in the main path of the poison cloud, but there is little doubt that in the thickest part those who did not escape either to a flank or to the rear were killed on the field. Thousands of those in the support trenches and reserve lines and in billets behind the line were suffocated—many to die later in the field ambulances and casualty clearing stations.

Of those on the fringe of the cloud many saved themselves by burying their faces in the earth. Others wrapped mufflers round their mouths and noses or stuffed handkerchiefs into their mouths. Many of these men were saved by their presence of mind, for though gassed at the time they recovered later, after treatment in the hospitals.

CANADIAN PLUCK

It is on record that the Canadians, with handkerchiefs or mufflers tied over their mouths, continued to engage the Germans and that a number of them actually charged back through the gas cloud in an endeavour to reach the enemy. What became of them is not known.

In this way a big gap was made in the Allied lines, through which the Germans advanced. But the Canadians quickly formed a flank on the left and stoutly engaged the enemy, with such success that they first slowed up and

then brought to a halt the advance of the Germans. It was this prompt action and gallant resistance that probably saved the day.

Whether the German High Command had underestimated the probable effect of the gas and had arranged for only a limited objective past which the local commanders did not take the initiative to go, or whether the latter were unaware of the real weakness of the Canadian line is unknown. The fact remains that they did not press their advantage to the full. They had taken the Allied front line on a wide front, killed or captured thousands of men, and taken sixty guns, and seemed to have a clear way through to Calais; but they were stopped by the pluck of a handful of Canadians. Reinforcements of men and guns were rushed up, and the immediate danger was over.

It is a matter for surmise how long the Germans had been planning and preparing their use of gas. The idea may have been a pre-war one, but it is difficult to believe that a project deliberately planned for years would not have been developed so as to make it a sure winner—for it could easily have been that. If, for example, they had made the attack over a wider front with such strong gas clouds as are now used nothing could possibly have stood against them. Every living thing to a depth of fifteen miles or more could have been killed.

On the other hand, it is impossible to imagine the use of poison gas as having been decided on without better preparation having been made to meet retaliation, unless it was assumed either that the use of the gas would be decisive or that at any rate the war would be finished before the Allies could hit back with the same weapon.

LATER DEVELOPMENTS

During the last two years, and particularly during the last year, the use of gas shell by the enemy has so increased in importance and extent as to indicate that the Germans regard this weapon as one of the most effective in their possession. At the present time practically all their gas attacks are carried out by means of shell. For the time being the "cloud" or "wave" gas attack appears to be in the background. It has been estimated that more than one fourth and possibly something like a third of *all* the shell of all calibres fired by the Germans are filled with poisonous gases. Often an intensive bombardment, lasting for hours and in which anything up to 50,000 or 100,000 shell are employed, is composed to the extent of 60 per cent., or even wholly of gas shell. Many months before the recent German "Push" a French officer estimated that on one corps alone the Germans had fired more than a million gas shell in under thirty days.

However, even these vast numbers of gas shell are not sufficient to keep the air poisoned all the time along the whole front. But when the gas does come, it comes in such quantities that there is no mistaking it. This is be-

cause, in the words of the official German instructions to their artillery on the use of gas shell, "concentration of gas shell, as regards time and area, namely, the production of the densest cloud on the target sector, is essential to good results. Single shots are valueless."

All calibres of guns, howitzers, and trench mortars are used by the Boche to fire gas shell. This gives him every variation in range from a few hundred yards up to miles, and with the largest shell, allows of more than fifty pounds of gas to be forced into the atmosphere from each round fired. And the gases used are so potent that they are effective when diluted with many thousand times their volume of air.

The great advantage of the gas shell is that it combines the accuracy of fire of the ordinary shell with a much wider killing range and is much more lasting. In other words, if skilfully employed, the gas, to a limited extent, becomes continuous in the atmosphere, both as regards time and space. It consequently has greater opportunity for putting men out of action than high explosive or shrapnel, which have no persistence and the effects of which may be very much localized. Owing to the ability of gas to move around corners the gas shell can take on targets which are denied to the high explosive or shrapnel.

To take only one example: Against a gun which is well placed and dug in, it is necessary that a "direct hit" be registered on it with high-explosive shell, if it is to be silenced or destroyed. Not so, however, with the gas shell. If well placed with regard to the direction of the wind, the gas from the gas shell will envelop the whole battery position, probably put some of the gunners out of action, and will compel the remainder to wear their gas masks. This reduces their fighting efficiency very considerably.

As now constructed, gas shell are almost exactly similar to the high-explosive shell of the same size, except that the space occupied by the explosive is taken up by the chemical filling. They are generally constructed so that they will burst on percussion.

At various times more than twenty different poisonous compounds have been used by the Germans in their shell or hand grenades, but many of the fillings are now obsolete. The original fillings were lacrymators or tear-producers like xylyl bromide or brom-ethylmethylketone, but these have now practically disappeared as has bromacetone, another powerful tear-producer which was used in shell and hand grenades. The very small amount of lacrymator now in use consists of a material called phenylcarbylamine chloride, which probably shows that the extensive use of bromine compounds by the Germans has begun to tell on their bromine supplies, big as they were in the Stassfurt deposits before the war.

At present the Germans use only three kinds of shell, though it is true that certain variations exist in each class. The shell of each type are distinctively

marked with different coloured crosses from which the gases themselves are consequently named. The three kinds are the Green Cross, the Yellow Cross, and the Blue Cross. The Green Cross gas is the chief killing gas. Chemically speaking, it is trichlormethylchloroformate. It is a most powerful asphyxiant and is the same kind of poison as the celebrated *phosgen* which is used in the cloud attacks and is also filled into trench mortar bombs. Like phosgen it has a "delayed" action and a man slightly gassed with it may think he is all right and then be taken ill and possibly succumb several hours later, especially if he has done any fatiguing work in between. A little of the Green Cross gas goes a long way, but it is not very persistent and will disappear from a gassed neighbourhood fairly soon after the bombardment has ceased unless the weather is very cold.

There are two variations of the Green Cross shell, called by the Germans Green Cross 1 and Green Cross 2. The former is the usual poisonous shell of to-day and contains the trichlormethylchloroformate mixed with a proportion of chloropicrin, a material which in itself is very poisonous and lacrymatory and which in smaller doses is apt to cause severe sickness—hence its nickname of "vomiting gas." The Green Cross 2 has the same basis but is mixed with a proportion of phosgen and the "sneezing gas" of the Blue Cross shell.

MUSTARD GAS

The Yellow Cross gas is the celebrated "mustard gas." It is the gas, *par excellence*, for persisting. It will hang about, even in the open, for hours and possibly for days and if it once gets into a dugout, the latter is very difficult to ventilate even with the aid of fires. Mustard gas is not primarily a "killing" gas though it will do that as well if breathed for a long time. Its chief value lies in the fact that, though it can be detected by its mustard or garlic-like smell and by the irritation it causes to the eyes, nose, and throat it is not sufficiently objectionable at first to cause any alarm. The effects come on later—possibly hours later—and develop in intensity until the man affected becomes a definite, if not permanent, casualty. The parts chiefly affected are the eyes and throat. The eyes suffer excruciating pain, swell up and discharge and, in fact, become temporarily blind. The throat and lungs get inflamed and corroded and bronchitis and possibly pneumonia are likely to be developed.

The mustard gas also burns the skin, especially if actual drops of liquid come in contact with it, and popular attention has been fixed more on this aspect of the mustard gas than on any other. As a matter of fact, however, the skin burning is the least important poisonous property and in itself is responsible for very few casualties. The chief effects are on the eyes and the respiratory passages.

As mustard gas will produce its effects in very low concentrations and as it

is so very persistent, one can readily understand that it is a weapon of very great military value even if the casualties it causes are not so severe as those of the asphyxiant gases like the Green Cross.

The third member of the trilogy, the Blue Cross Shell, is quite different from the other two. For one thing, the active component is a solid and for another the shell itself is a high-explosive shell of almost full violence, the solid poison being embedded in the fused T. N. T. enclosed in a glass bottle or in some cases actually mixed up with a special explosive. When the shell bursts the solid chemical is atomized and distributed into the atmosphere in the form of tiny particles which even in very small concentrations cause intense sneezing and are also very irritant to the eyes and lungs. Chemically speaking, the substance is diphenylchlorarsine, but it is generally known simply as "sneezing gas." Apparently the enemy hoped by disguising its presence with the high explosive to attain a surprise effect and to have men gassed before they realized that gas shell were about.

It will have been realized that the German gas shells are not really gas shells in the sense that they contain gas under pressure. Two of the "Coloured Crosses" are liquids—the most volatile component of which is less volatile than water—and the third is a solid.

Only after the explosion has particulated the poison and given it every opportunity to vaporize can any appreciable concentration of gas be present in the air. In the case of the solid "sneezing gas" the fine particles probably remain more like a smoke and are hardly gasified at all.

To obtain their maximum effect the gas shell are dropped just to windward of the target so that the gas is driven over the position by the action of the prevailing wind currents. For this purpose it is essential that the behaviour of the wind be thoroughly studied, not only at the battery position, but also as to its likely behaviour at the target end. Gas bombardments on small targets are, therefore, conducted in consultation with the local officers of the Gas and the Meteorological Services. For longer bombardments local variations in wind direction due to contour or other features are not so important.

With regard to the mustard gas the German Staff insists that full use be made of its slight smell and its non-immediate effects. To hide its presence as far as possible until it is too late, it is frequently fired (at any rate at first) in conjunction with high explosive. From two to four Yellow Cross shell are fired to one explosive shell.

Owing to its great lasting power the Boche makes the mustard gas his chief neutralizing agent. By firing it on our batteries, our gathering and halting places, on our reserve lines, and so on, he compels our men to wear their masks—it may be for many hours on end—not necessarily during the fighting, but before they go up to the line—with the idea of causing them losses, paralyzing their activity, and wearing them out so that they will not arrive

at the fighting with the freshness and vigour necessary to meet or to make an assault.

Where an infantry advance is to be made the Germans generally choose targets—particularly our artillery—owing to the possible danger of gassing their own troops, but this is not always possible and in certain cases they have used, simultaneously with their gas shell, shell filled with red and purple dyes in themselves harmless, and intended to indicate contaminated shell holes to the advancing infantry so that the gassed areas can be avoided.

As a rule, however, the front-line troops and other close-in targets are chiefly treated with Green Cross shell, frequently mixed up with Blue Cross or sneezing gas so as to prevent adjustment or cause displacement of the respirators. Blue Cross shell are seldom used alone. This "non-persistent" gas bombardment of the front line generally ceases at least one hour before the assault, but the "persistent" gas bombardment may continue throughout the operation.

After a Green Cross bombardment evil-smelling but harmless gases may be used so as to induce our fellows to continue wearing their masks although the advancing enemy will know that he can do without them and so on. But these are minor points in a much bigger game, the extent and importance of which are steadily increasing.



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